

Iraq says U.S. politicising issue of Kuwaiti missing

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq accused the United States and Kuwait Saturday of using the issue of Kuwaitis missing since the 1990-1991 Gulf war as a political ploy to prolong sanctions.

"The issue of missing Kuwaitis is... a political tool America and Kuwait employ to justify prolonging the sanctions," the government newspaper Al Jumhuriya said.

Gulf war ceasefire Resolution 687 linking the ban on Iraqi oil exports to full adherence to the 1991 Gulf war ceasefire terms on disarmament had "nothing to do with the missing (Kuwaitis)," it said.

President Bill Clinton said in a letter to Congress Tuesday that the United States would not lift the oil sanctions until Baghdad accounted for the missing Kuwaitis, returned Kuwaiti property and improved its human rights record.

"Clinton lies when he claims that Iraq refuses to return missing Kuwaitis and Kuwaiti property," Al Jumhuriya said.

Kuwait, backed by its ally the United States, wants Iraq to account for 600 missing Kuwaitis, among other demands, before the oil embargo can be lifted.

Al Jumhuriya said Iraq was willing to return Kuwaiti property but the Kuwaiti authorities "have frequently rejected receiving it or conducting talks on how to hand it over."

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said Friday that Kuwaiti and Iraqi officials ended a two-day meeting in Geneva on clearing up the fate of 600 people who went missing during Iraq's seven-month occupation of the emirate.

But the ICRC shed no light on whether any of the 600 cases had been resolved.

The Iraqi News Agency said in June that Iraq had dealt with 168 individual files given to it by the ICRC.

Iraq has repeatedly denied that it had any Kuwaiti detainees on its territory, but says it would do its best to investigate their fate. On Saturday, Iraq said it would do everything possible to have the sanctions eased or lifted.

Diplomats estimate the number of Britons, Saudis, Americans and French nationals missing in the conflict at about two dozen.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, ending a visit to Kuwait Thursday, said he would ask Baghdad to step up the search for missing Kuwaitis. Iraq is a long-time ally of Moscow.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's defence minister said in remarks published Saturday the army's effectiveness was 85 per cent restored after damage caused by the Iraqi occupation of 1990-91.

Sheikh Ahmad Hamoud Al Jaber Al Sabah added that Kuwait and other Gulf Arab states were considering setting up an early warning system to help bolster defences.

the English-language Arab Times quoted him as saying in an interview.

"The ability of the army is over 85 per cent now and we hope to complete the rest of the work over the coming few years," he said.

"At present the Kuwaiti army is capable of safeguarding the security of Kuwait's borders and appropriately responding to any enemy movements, supported by brothers in the GCC and friendly troops in the region."

Under a defence pact with Washington concluded after the Gulf war, U.S. weaponry is stored in Kuwait for use by American forces who would fly in from Indian Ocean bases in case of any emergency such as Iraq's 1990 invasion.

Kuwait is a member of the Peninsula Shield defence force created by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Oman and Kuwait to reduce their military dependence on Western allies.

Sheikh Ahmad said the GCC economic and military alliance was studying ways to adapt the Peninsula Shield to help the region's countries become self-reliant on defence.

He added he wanted to expand the army by recruiting individuals suitable for training in high-tech weaponry.

Kuwait is gradually rebuilding its 15,000-strong armed forces following the Iraqi occupation in which most of its weaponry and equipment was looted or destroyed. It also maintains a 20,000-strong reserve force.

Iraq's army took only 12 to 18 hours to wipe out opposition from units of Kuwait's army during the 1990 invasion.

In a separate development, Kuwaiti Interior Ministry figures published Saturday showed Kuwait deported 6,560 expatriates in 1994, 4,923 of them for violating residency laws.

Others deported included people convicted of liquor offences or crimes involving immorality or theft, the figures published in the Arab Times said. Use of alcohol other than for medical purposes is banned in Kuwait.

In Kuwait, expatriates convicted of a range of crimes including residency violations are usually deported following payment of fines or completion of jail terms.

Foreigners, most of them Iraq and Asian guest workers, make up one million of the Gulf state's total 1.8 million population.

The number of crimes committed in Kuwait in 1994 rose 24 per cent to 18,969, of which 5,622 or 29 per cent were felonies and 11,654 or 61 per cent were misdemeanours. The ministry figures gave no further breakdown.

should have been freed because according to Islamic Law a woman has the right to defend herself against a rapist to the point of killing him.

"All I want to do is be freed," said Ms. Balaban, her head covered by an Islamic-style black veil.

The previous verdict was cancelled by Sheikh Zaid who wants "to be doubly sure that she gets a fair trial... It doesn't mean the previous judges were wrong or that there was doubt, necessarily, as to her innocence," an official earlier told Reuters.

UAE judge: Retrial could be in favour of maid

AL AIN, United Arab Emirates (R) — The retrial of a 16-year-old Filipina jailed for killing an Arab employer who raped her started Saturday and the chief judge said it could be in the housemaid's favour.

"It could be in her (Sarah Balaban's) favour," the head of the three-man bench, Chief Judge Ahmad Al Karwani, told reporters. He did not elaborate.

The court said a final verdict would be passed on Aug. 36.

UAE President Sheikh

Zaid Ibn Sultan Al Nahayan ordered the retrial of Ms. Balaban who was sentenced in June by a Sharia Islamic Court to seven years in prison on charges of manslaughter for stabbing her employer 34 times.

The court also concluded that she had been raped.

The prosecution Saturday reiterated a demand that she be sentenced to death for murder.

Ms. Balaban said both inside and outside the court that she killed Almas Mohammad Al Balousht in

self-defence and should be acquitted.

"It was self-defence. I was defending my honour," the maid told reporters through a translator ahead of the retrial. "I accept what I did and I have conditioned myself for whatever the outcome is... I have no remorse. I did what I had to do," she added, speaking through the window of a locked room adjoining the court.

The original ruling drew fire from Philippine officials who said it was contradictory and that Ms. Balaban

largely because Syria made it clear to other Arab states that normalisation was a bargaining chip that should be withheld until Israel returns land — especially the Golan Heights, to Syria.

Dr. Muasher said what is holding Arabs back is the unfinished business in the peace process: Israeli peace with Syria and Lebanon, and a final settlement that resolves Arab claims to Jerusalem.

Arab states have reason to pay attention to Syria's wishes. Damascus hosts a dozen radical anti-peace groups and has in the past used violence and threats to veto policies that it opposes.

Most Arab states have ended the boycott of companies doing business with Israel, but direct trade with Israel is limited. Jordan has a small economy, and only recently opened its borders. Trade only amounts to about \$80 million a year with Egypt and \$100 million with Morocco, most through third parties.

"We have passed the point of no return but to see real fruits will take time," said Dan Katarivas of the Israeli Trade Ministry.

New Arab diplomats shy away from Israeli embrace

TEL AVIV (AP) — When Israel and the PLO signed a peace agreement two years ago, Israelis had high hopes that normal relations with Arab states were just around the corner after decades of isolation.

But it hasn't worked out that way. Despite an initial flurry of contacts with moderate Arab regimes, the anticipated cultural and trade relations have been slow in coming.

The main reason appears to be Syria. Israeli officials say President Hafez Assad persuaded other Arab leaders not to upgrade relations with Israel until there was progress in Israel-Syria talks.

Arab reserve is evident in the low profile maintained by representatives of Jordan and Morocco, the two Arab countries that have established diplomatic ties with the Jewish state recently.

"I don't want to be a celebrity," said Jordan's Ambassador Marwan Muasher, speaking in the beachfront Tel Aviv hotel suite that has served as a temporary embassy since last December.

Dr. Muasher acknowledged that he does already

have some Israeli friends. But while he predicted the Jewish state would one day be accepted in the region, he felt the psychological barriers brought on by many decades of war would first have to be overcome.

"There is an over eagerness on the part of the Israeli public to normalise relations with Jordan," he said. "This is not matched by a similar one in the Jordanian public."

Diplomats at the Moroccan interest office, located in an apartment building on Tel Aviv's fashionable Hamedina Square, were reluctant to discuss relations despite brisk Israeli tourism to their North African country.

Consul Saeed Aminzou volunteered only that 100 visas are issued each day. "So you see, we are really too busy for interviews," he smiled. When pressed, Mr. Aminzou, in his 30s, termed Israel "a nice mix of cultures."

"I have been to good restaurants with my colleagues," he added, apologising that he could not offer a business card and rising to indicate the brief meeting was over.

The Arab diplomat with the highest profile remains

Mohammad Bassiouni, Egypt's ambassador for the past decade.

Through good-natured TV appearances and well-attended parties, Mr. Bassiouni has helped chip away at many Israelis' lingering distrust of Arabs. But despite 16 years of peace, Israeli-Egyptian relations remain a one-way street, with few Egyptians travelling to Israel either for tourism or business.

Israel's continuing isolation suggests that the idea of a "new Middle East" promoted by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres was premature.

In the wake of the September 1993 Israel-PLO accord, Israeli leaders were feted by King Hassan II in Morocco. They were also openly welcomed in Tunis, where Israeli jets had bombed PLO Headquarters in 1985.

Within months leaders and business delegations were touring Kuwait, Oman and Gulf emirates. Officials in Israel disclosed plans for a natural gas pipeline from the Gulf to Israel. The first regional conference attended by Israel was held in Morocco.

The momentum fizzled.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Arab League chief to visit Algeria

CAIRO (AFP) — Arab League chief Esmat Abdul Meguid is to visit Algeria for talks on the possible deployment of league observers in presidential elections. Akhbar Al Yom newspaper said Saturday. The Egyptian government daily said the secretary general was expected to travel to Algeria on Aug. 21 to meet President Liamine Zerroul, who aims to hold the elections before the end of the year.

Mrs. Arafat, daughter leave hospital

PARIS (AFP) — Suha Arafat, the wife of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat, left the American Hospital after giving birth on July 24 to a baby daughter. Suha Arafat carried the newborn Zahwa, named after the mother of the PLO chief, in her arms after being released from the hospital. Officials said, Mr. Arafat had travelled to Paris after Zahwa was born to see her, and to meet with French President Jacques Chirac. The baby was the first for the couple.

Arafat marks 66th birthday

SOUDANIYYEH, Gaza Strip (AP) — No one sang "happy birthday Yasser" and there were no candles on the cake. But Yasser Arafat's 66th birthday was celebrated Friday for the first time in Gaza since the Palestinian leader set up his self-rule government last year. A beaming Arafat sat between two of his ministers in a large seaside tent north of Gaza City and watched the show that was put on in his honour by the Palestinian Union for Equitation. There were speeches that extolled Mr. Arafat as a hero, traditional dances and gifts: A copper Turkish coffee set and a picture of the Dome of the Rock. There was also horse racing of some sort: The horses trotted on a stretch of sand some 150 metres from the birthday stand, weaving between families having refreshments and their cars. Sugar-coated almonds and chocolate wafers were offered to the estimated 150 guests inside the tent. When the two-tier cream cake was brought in, bordered with cream curls and almonds, Mr. Arafat was true to his aloof image and just gazed at the brown chocolate horse in the middle and the inscriptions that read: "A thousand congratulations for President Abu Ammar" (Arafat's nom-de-guerre) and "may you live 120 years." He then asked his bodyguards to take it away.

Nabil Shaath celebrates marriage

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Top Palestinian negotiator Nabil Shaath celebrated his marriage Friday in a festive ceremony at the Orient House, the PLO headquarters in Jerusalem. The Jerusalem celebration was one of the three festivities for the newlyweds, who were married in bride Rajah Abu-Ghazaleh's West Bank hometown of Nablus Thursday. The third celebration was expected to take place in Gaza Sunday. Ms. Abu-Ghazaleh, 33, from a prominent Nablus family, wore a traditional Palestinian robe at the Jerusalem celebration, a red, orange and black robe elaborately embroidered with yellow trimming. "I am here, on the very happy occasion of my marriage, in Jerusalem," Dr. Shaath told his guests. "I am a Gazan married to a Nablusi Palestinian dressed in the... robe that my great grandmother wore in (the southern Israeli town of) Beer Sheva when my great grandfather was the mayor of Beer Sheva. So I somehow feel altogether Palestinian." Besides family and friends, ministers of the Palestinian authority, foreign and local diplomats attended the celebrations, as did his Israeli negotiating partners in the original self-rule negotiations, businessman Yair Hershfeld and Ron Pundak, Israel Television reported. But most Israeli ministers and legislators, including Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, stayed away from the controversial venue in East Jerusalem, which right-wing Israelis want closed because they believe it serves as a Palestinian political presence in Jerusalem. Dovish legislator Yael Dayan, who accepted the invitation, said she did not believe the venue had any political implications. "I think there is no political significance to a wedding at the Orient House," Ms. Dayan said on Israel Television. "Nabil Shaath is a good friend of ours. If you ask who is the one who took part with us in making this peace with this government, it was Nabil Shaath." This was Dr. Shaath's second marriage, after he was widowed 13 years ago when his Egyptian wife died in a car crash. He has three children from his first marriage.

Emir of Qatar to visit S. Arabia

DOHA (AFP) — The new emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, will visit Saudi Arabia Sunday, a senior official here told AFP Friday. The trip will be Sheikh Hamad's first foreign visit since he overthrew his father as Qatar's leader in a bloodless coup on June 27. The senior official, who requested anonymity, did not say how long the emir would stay or what the focus of the discussions would be. Saudi Arabia was quick to recognise the new emir of Qatar, despite a dispute between the two countries concerning their common border. Qatar's foreign minister, Hamad bin Jasssem Al Thani, said in early July that differences between the two Gulf neighbours would soon be resolved.

Ancient burial vault found in Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — A 2,000-year-old burial vault has been discovered in east Jerusalem, which was annexed by Israel after the 1967 war, Israeli Television reported Friday. Eleven burial chambers were discovered, some used by Jews in the first century AD, others employed by Romans and still others used by Christians in the fifth century. The chambers, in excellent condition, were found several dozen metres underground, outside the

city's old walls. Sliding stone doors covered with geometric designs, and inscriptions in Greek and Hebrew, provided access to the chambers. Gold jewellery and glass jars were also discovered by archaeologists. The exact location of the discovery was not revealed for fear of provoking orthodox Jews who oppose the archaeological digs for religious reasons or protests from Palestinians opposed to the Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem.

Iran students protest newspaper ban

TEHRAN (AFP) — Islamic radical students in Iranian universities have protested the closure of a popular left-wing newspaper, calling the government's action "illegal," a student group said Saturday. The authorities banned the Peyman-e-Daneshjoo (Student's Message) weekly earlier this week on the grounds that it published "sensational" articles "incompatible" with Iran's press law. The paper was very popular for its open and stinging criticism of the country's principal leaders, including President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. "To perpetuate its survival, the ruling faction suppresses any act of criticism and constructive suggestion by loyal and revolutionary forces," the Union of Islamic Student Associations said in a fax received by AFP. "The illegal ban against Peyman is designed to intimidate revolutionary figures and to sow a sense of insecurity within intellectual circles in the country." The student associations plan to organise a rally at Tehran University Sunday to voice their outrage over the ban and "defend their rights." The former managing director of Peyman, Heshmatollah Tabarzadi, is expected to deliver a speech. The ban was seen here as another setback for Islamic leftist newspapers, which are among the few to publish independent information, provoking angry responses from top officials. The weekly was the second radical newspaper to be banned in the Islamic republic this year after the closure of Jahan-e-Islam (World of Islam) in February. Peyman recently published a series of articles exposing a multi-million-dollar embezzlement in a state bank in Tehran, in which the brother of a top official was later implicated.

S. Africa urged to halt oil deal with Iran

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The United States urged South Africa to halt a pending oil deal with Iran, charging that Tehran should be deprived of revenues until it stops supporting international terrorism. Though the United States enjoys a "growing... and very good" relationship with South Africa, State Department spokesman David Johnson said Pretoria's intention to store 15 million barrels of Iranian oil was ill-considered. "We believe it is inappropriate to provide Tehran with additional financial resources while the government supports terrorism and pursues weapons of mass destruction," he said. "And we've urged (South Africa) to reconsider its cooperation with Iran." The United States has imposed an embargo against Iran. While it only applies to U.S. citizens or companies, U.S. officials have urged other countries to follow suit. Mr. Johnson's statement comes at a time of strained relations between the United States and South Africa over issues ranging from the Iranian oil deal to intellectual property issues. The United States has recently placed South Africa on a "watch list" for what the State Department called the "serious problems" U.S. firms have encountered in defending intellectual property rights there. Firms have complained that South African companies are using well-known U.S. trademarks in violation of international statutes.

Kuwaitis urge end to Bosnia killings

KUWAIT (AP) — Hundreds of protesters, mostly Islamic fundamentalists, demanded an end to the killing of Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The peaceful rally took place on a beach in the evening, after having been announced earlier in mosques at Friday prayer services. Protesters carried anti-U.N. and U.S. placards that read: "Shame on U.S." and "shame on U.S. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali." "We are asking the United Nations, the European Union and most of all America: the leaders of the world, to put an end to this savagery," parliament Deputy Khaled Al Adwa told the crowd. The fundamentalist lawmaker noted that the European and American peoples favour the Bosnian Muslims in the conflict with the predominantly Orthodox Christian Serbs. But, he added, "the hands of (Western political figures) are reddened by the blood of our brothers in Bosnia-Herzegovina."

Rebel Kurds kill eight in Turkey

ANKARA (R) — Rebel Kurds killed eight civilians, including two children under 10, in an overnight rocket attack on a village in southern Turkey near Syria, the semi-official Anatolian News Agency said Saturday. Six of the dead were from the same family. Four others were injured in the attack by the rebel Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in Hatay province, Anatolian said. "This is a massacre," said Utku Acun, governor of Hatay, which stands on Turkey's easternmost border with Syria. More than 17,500 people have been killed in Turkey in the PKK's 11-year fight for independence or autonomy in the south-east.

Turkish woman arrested in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Pakistan's Airport Security Force has arrested a Turkish woman after seizing three kilograms of heroin from her, the official Associated Press of Pakistan news agency said Saturday. She was held at the Islamabad airport where she was to board a Pakistan International Airlines flight to London via Istanbul, APP said. The agency did not identify the woman, nor did it say when she was arrested.

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel: 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:00 The Flintstones
14:30 The Mighty Jungle
15:00 Pugsley Summer
15:30 Movie Magic
16:00 Families
17:00
Children's Programme — Spirou
17:30 Li Marche Du Siccil
18:00 News in French
19:15 Ushala
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Tomorrow's World
20:00 Nurses
20:30 The Bold and the Beautiful
21:15 Startline
22:00 News in English
22:25 Countdown
23:30 The Hidden Room
23:59 Grace Under Fire

PRAYER TIMES

04:22 Fajr
05:49 (Sunrise) Dhuha
12:41 Dhuhr
16:22 Asr
19:34 Maghrib
21:01 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swatifa, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 623364
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 625256
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Normal summer weather conditions will prevail with winds north-westerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp. 17/30
Aqaba 25/37
Deserts 16/35
Jordan Valley 23/36

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 30, Aqaba 37, Humidity

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

readings: Amman 40 per cent, Aqaba 34 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Khalil Abu Marjoub 779797
Dr. Munir Al Qasbi 779599
Dr. Mohammad Al Shabaki 723222
Dr. Mohammad Lubbad 683585
Fardos pharmacy 661912
Al Asena pharmacy 631055
Najrouh pharmacy 625672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shimoon pharmacy 637660
Najrouh pharmacy 624782
Najbi pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Ali Al Shogairi 246140
Alquds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:
Dr. Tarq Hijawi 965441
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 630341
Rescue 622622
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Fire Brigade 192, 621111, 637777
Blood Bank 771331
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630331
Hotel Complaints 630840
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 874767
Complaints 777111
Amman Municipality 777111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010240
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 774111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53230
Queen Alia Int'l. Airport 08-53230

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Ann 644281/6

Akileh Maternity, J. Ann. 643441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642622
Malinas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmouani 664714
Shmouani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 848945
Al-Muasher Hospital 667279
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/7
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664166/6
Irbid, Al-Muasher 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 771126
Army, Marfa 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 607155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)980560
Irbid Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990401
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275533
Great Cable Hospital (02)272728
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (02)27100
Al Nafes Hospital (02)27100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)341111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by

ROYAL JORDANIAN (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (09)532302-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

05:30 Bangkok (RJ)
09:30 Jeddah (RJ)
09:30 Larnaca (RJ)
11:45 Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
10:10 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
18:30 Aqaba (RJ)
18:30 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
12:15 Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)
14:55 Amsterdam, Brussels (RJ)
17:20 Chicago, Amsterdam (add) (RJ)
17:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
21:20 Rome (add) (RJ)
18:55 London (RJ)
19:00 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
19:15 Athens (RJ)
19:25 Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)
20:40 Rome (RJ)
21:50 Rome (add) (RJ)
22:30 Frankfurt (RJ)
22:35 Vienna, Munich (RJ)
01:15 Cairo (RJ)
02:15 Aqaba (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

07:30 Rome (AZ)
08:45 Beirut (ME)
13:30 Sanaa (Y)
14:30 Doha (GF)
16:05 Moscow (SU)
21:25 Cairo (MS)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:25 Madrid (RJ)
06:40 Beirut (RJ)
08:15 Larnaca (RJ)
11:45 Vienna, Munich (RJ)
12:00 Frankfurt (RJ)
12:10 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:15 Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)
12:40 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
13:20 Rome (add) (RJ)
13:25 Athens (RJ)
14:20 London (RJ)
15:00 Cairo (RJ)
21:25 Jeddah (RJ)
21:25 New Delhi (RJ)
21:45 Damascus (RJ)
22:40 Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
23:45 Abu Dhabi, Doha (RJ)
23:45 Bangkok (RJ)
23:50 Sanaa (RJ)
23:59 Orange (RJ)
07:30 Rome (AZ)
08:45 Beirut (ME)
13:30 Sanaa (Y)
14:30 Doha (GF)
16:05 Moscow (SU)
21:25 Cairo (MS)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

11:30 Sanaa (Y)
13:40 Bahrain, Sharjah (GF)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES
Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple 700/500
Banana (Mulkannar) 620
Cabbage 100/50
Carrot 220/120
Cauliflower 260/160
Cucumbers (large) 150/100
Cucumbers (small) 200/180
Eggplant 180/100
Garlic 650/500
Grapes 350/250
Lemon 630/500
Marrow (large) 140/90
Marrow (small) 200/180
Mulukhia 130/80
Okra 750/600
Onion (dry) 200/100
Orange 420/250
Peas 800/600
Pepper (hot) 130/80
Pepper (sweet) 160/100
Potato 360/260
String Beans 420/300
Sweet Melon 300/200
Tomato 1400/800
Water Melon 120/60

Home
Jordan. Isra

AMMAN (R) — Israel and Jordan are expected to sign a trade agreement in the coming few weeks to pave the way for a free exchange of goods after Jordan's peace treaty with Israel, according to a source in the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

Abol Raghieb

In a statement issued Friday by Al-Dustour newspaper, the minister said the agreement would be signed in the coming weeks, which is expected to provide for an exchange of customs duties on goods.

Israel has agreed to give Jordanian products preferential treatment in trade with Israel, this agreement is under discussion under discussion on both sides, the minister said.

Parties con claim U.S. i

AMMAN (R) — The opposition parties in Jordan have claimed that the United States is involved in the Israeli occupation of Palestine and that it is supporting the Israeli military and security forces.

The statement was made by the Jordanian Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which was formed by the United Arab List, the Islamic Front, and the National Front.

The statement said that the United States is providing the Israeli military with advanced weapons and technology, and that it is supporting the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

The statement also said that the United States is supporting the Israeli military and security forces in their operations against the Palestinian resistance.

The statement called on the United States to withdraw its support for the Israeli occupation of Palestine and to support the Palestinian people in their struggle for freedom and independence.

19,750 tourists visi

AMMAN (R) — The Jordanian Ministry of Tourism has announced that 19,750 tourists visited Jordan in the first seven months of 1994.

The tourists came from 100 different countries, with the largest numbers coming from the United States, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

The ministry said that the number of tourists visiting Jordan has increased significantly in recent years, and that it is expected to continue to grow in the future.

The ministry also said that it is working to improve the tourism infrastructure in Jordan, including the development of new hotels and the improvement of the roads and airports.

Jordan, Israel soon to sign trade agreement

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan and Israel are expected to sign a trade agreement in the coming few weeks to prepare for a free exchange of goods after Jordan passed a law ending the boycott of Israel, according to Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb.

In a statement quoted Saturday by Al-Dustour daily, the minister said that Jordanian and Israeli teams are currently involved in finalising the terms of the agreement which is expected to provide for an exemption of customs duty on some products.

Israel has tentatively agreed to give Jordanian products preferential treatment in trade but details on this agreement are still under discussion by the two sides, the minister said.

With the end of the boycott on Israel, Jordanian products will have new markets, an added benefit to the national economy, he said.

Responding to a question about the prospect of setting up a free trade zone between the two sides, Mr. Abul Ragheb said that this subject was not under consideration at present and that discussions on this matter would be lengthy and could take place after the flow of goods has been monitored between the two sides and after rigorous examination on the feasibility of such a project.

As for Jordanian-Palestinian trade, the minister said that agreements on trade exchanges between the two sides was in force but that the two sides may, on occasions, introduce amendments to their agreements.



Ali Abul Ragheb

due to developments in trade exchanges and in consideration of the needs of both parties.

Parties condemn Abu Marzouk arrest, claim U.S. hostility still apparent

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan's opposition parties Saturday voiced their condemnation of the arrest in the United States of Mousa Abu Marzouk, head of the political wing of the militant Islamic group, Hamas, and demanded his immediate release.

A statement, a copy of which was made available to the Jordan Times, charged that Abu Marzouk's arrest was part of a plot planned and carried out by American security authorities with Israeli occupation authorities under the pretext of fighting terrorism.

The statement said that the arrest reaffirms Washington's continued favourable bias towards the Zionist entity, America's hostile attitude towards Arab and Islamic nations and their support of Zionist aggression on Palestinian people and their occupation of Arab Palestine.

This hostile action against Palestinians, "asserts" once again the American administration's total disregard for the freedom of other nations and Washington's determination to deprive them of their legitimate rights, the statement said.

The statement also said that the American administration is making a mockery of international law for the purpose of currying favour with Zionist organisations which continue to control American policies in matters connected to the Arab-Zionist conflict and the issues of the Arab nation.

The arrest of Abu Marzouk is bound to inflame the feelings of Arabs and Muslims and would incite angry reactions against the United States, the statement warned.

Abu Marzouk was detained 10 days ago by immigration officials in New York. Israel issued a warrant for his arrest and said it would seek his extradition.

The statement said that the undersigned appeal to all humanitarian organisations which defend human rights, all political parties, associations and various organisations around the world to ensure the immediate release of Abu Marzouk and help stop his extradition to Israel.

The leader's arrest and extradition to the occupation authorities, the statement continued, would result in

further instability that would not be confined to the Palestinian arena but would extend to the Arab and international spheres.

It said that a just, durable and comprehensive peace in the region can never be established by depriving its peoples of their rights, and that neither can it survive by arresting freedom fighters in a legitimate struggle for freedom and accusing them of acts of terrorism.

The statement called for the establishment of peace by putting an end to the occupation of Arab lands and the restoration of all the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

The statement was signed by the following parties: The Islamic Action Front, the National Action Front, the Jordanian Democratic People's Party, the Democratic Arab Party, the Progressive Arab Ba'ath Party, the Constitutional Arab Jordanian Front, the Jordanian Socialist Arab Ba'ath Party, the "Jordaniyya" Socialist Democratic Party, the Jordanian Communist Party, the Jordanian Democratic People's Unionist Party and the Jordanian Democratic Progressive Party.

Premier chairs meeting of economic council, stresses responsibility in promoting investments

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Saturday presided over a meeting of the Economic Consultative Council (ECC) to review preparations for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) conference due to be held here in October.

A statement following the meeting, which was held at the Prime Ministry, said that the council discussed a Jordanian working paper to be reviewed by the conference's participants.

The statement said that the Prime Minister stressed the common responsibility of the public and private sector in promoting the country's readiness for foreign and Arab investments.

Speaking at the meeting was Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb, who briefed the council on official preparations for the conference.

Mr. Abul Ragheb said that the decision to hold the conference in Amman was taken at the Casablanca conference which set up a committee grouping Asian and European countries as well as the United States and Canada to help organise the conference.

He said that at least 1,000 participants are expected to take part in the conference and that consultations are under way among the various participating countries over the principles which will be contained in the Amman Declaration.

The Amman Declaration is expected to underline the importance of regional projects, the creation of the



Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Saturday presides over a meeting of the Economic Consultative Council at which preparations for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) conference were reviewed (Petra photo)

Middle East Development Bank and the formation of a regional tourist council as well as a regional businessmen's council.

A Jordanian steering committee has decided to present four main topics to the Amman conference.

These topics centre on economy and infrastructure, commerce and industry, financing and investments and the economic environment, Mr. Abul Ragheb said.

There are four categories of Jordanian schemes to be submitted to the conference, the minister said. The first includes 27 projects estimated at a cost of \$3.4 billion mostly covering infrastructure schemes to be implemented by the private and public sectors.

These projects were prepared by the Ministry of Planning in cooperation with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and cover energy, industry, mining, transport, communications, tourism, water and environment sectors.

The second category includes 65 Jordanian projects covering small and medium-size industries prepared by the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

The third focuses on international financing for the development of the Jordan Rift Valley. And the fourth category includes projects which are usually undertaken by the private sector.

Mr. Abul Ragheb said that Jordan will submit regional projects in coordination with

Egypt, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and Israel.

According to the minister, Jordan has sent invitations to prominent and key people from the private sectors of several countries.

The Economic Consultative Council is made up of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh, several cabinet members and representatives of the private sector in Jordan.

Ministry shifts to promoting vocational specialisations to serve local job market requirements—Rateb Saoud

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Higher Education is currently reducing the number of students accepted to academic curricula at the country's colleges and is instead expanding its enrollment of students in vocational specialisations and introducing new majors that would meet local labour market requirements, according to Minister of Higher Education Rateb Saoud.

This policy was adopted because graduates of academic faculties are finding it difficult to get jobs, while vocational training graduates are being employed at a better rate, said the minister in an opening address to a six-day symposium on higher and advanced management of education in the Arab World.

The Ministry of Higher Education has also begun diversifying vocational training at the community colleges and introducing a one-year training course in fields which are in high demand in the local market, Mr. Saoud said.

While noting that major changes in technology and science education have been achieved in Arab educational institutions over the past few years, he said it must be admitted that the Arab World still faces an educational crisis of different forms.

Mr. Saoud said the devel-



Participants from around the Arab World Saturday attend the opening of a six-day symposium on higher and advanced management of education in the region. The symposium was opened by Minister of Higher Education Rateb Saoud (Petra photo)

opments in the fields of science and technology have presented new challenges to educational institutions but it is regrettable to say that a crisis exists in the form of inability of these institutions to adapt their educational and vocational training programmes to the actual needs

of the local labour markets, he added.

Referring to the symposium, Dr Saoud said that it has been organised to enable educationists and specialists to diagnose the problems and suggest solutions, adding that without human resources development the

Arab World can not dream of attaining socio-economic development.

He said that despite the great number of universities in the Arab World the region's countries have not yet risen to the occasion and failed so far to meet the

requirements of the community.

Delegates representing Jordan, Palestine, Yemen, the United Arab Emirates, Syria, Iraq, Libya and Algeria are participating in the symposium, which is being held at the Jerusalem Hotel in Amman.



Ministry of Education Secretary General Izzat Jaradat (centre) Saturday presides over a workshop organised by the ministry at the Teachers Club to discuss means of assessing students' performance (Petra photo)

NEWS IN BRIEF

RJ staff to get free cargo benefit

AMMAN (Petra) — Chief Executive Officer of Royal Jordanian (RJ) Nader Dahabi has issued a decision allowing RJ personnel to transport various quantities of cargo aboard RJ planes for free. Executive Director of RJ's Air Cargo Mohammad Hashem Murtadi said the decision includes all RJ personnel, depending on their period of service. He said employees can use this privilege only once during the coming five-year period. Mr. Murtadi said those who spent 5-10 years working for RJ are entitled to transport 100 kilograms of cargo free of charge over the coming five years. He said those who served RJ for 10-15 years are entitled to transport 200 kilograms of cargo during the same period. Those who served the air carrier for 15-20 years, he said, can transport up to 300 kilograms of goods. And those who worked for RJ for more than 20 years are entitled to transport up to 500 kilograms of goods.

19,750 tourists visit Petra in July

AMMAN (Petra) — A total of 19,750 tourists visited Petra in July, including 14,850 foreigners and 4,900 Jordanians. Only half that number visited the ancient Nabataean city during July of 1994. Officials said the fees collected from the

visitors totalled JD 305,000 during the month.

College dean heads for Cairo conference

AMMAN (Petra) — Dean of the Princess Rahma Social Services College Faisal Gharaibeh on Saturday left Amman for Cairo to participate in a conference on the Islamic role in social services which opened there Saturday evening. Dr. Gharaibeh said the conference, organised jointly by the International Islamic Thought Institute and the International Social Services Institute, will discuss social services from an Islamic perspective and means of developing curricula at social services institutes.

CDD responds to 780 emergencies last week

AMMAN (Petra) — The Civil Defence Department (CDD) dealt with 780 different emergencies last week, most of which involved first aid cases. During the same week, the CDD reported 117 fires, most of them in forest areas. The department also reported 21 rescue cases and 16 deaths, saying seven resulted from sickness and nine from accidents which included road accidents, electric shocks, drowning and festive shooting at weddings. The department issued a warning urging citizens not to use firearms in weddings.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

* "Honey, I shrunk the kids," at the American Center at 5:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

- * Paintings by Aneta Traikova at Alia Art Gallery
- * "Exhibition of Chinese Products '95," at Al Bassam Hall, King Abdullah Gardens.
- * Handicrafts and souvenirs at the Amman Citadel (9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.)
- * Exhibition demonstrating the development of cinema over the past century at the French Cultural Centre.

Orphans' Fund reaches

JD 33.2m in capital

AMMAN (Petra) — The Orphans' Fund, an organisation established 21 years ago to protect the finances of young orphans in the country, said Saturday that its total capital by the end of 1994 stood at JD 33,215,751, which brought in a total revenue of JD 2,457,015, according to the fund's director, Mohammad Kreishan. Most of the funds are invested in development and economic projects and are directed towards increasing the financial capital of orphans, Mr. Kreishan said. Funds are also used to buy shares in several major shareholding companies and in the purchase of land. In his report on the fund's

operations in the past two years, Mr. Kreishan said that funds have also been invested in housing projects, agricultural, commercial and industrial schemes.

Lately, money from the fund has gone towards investment in small size projects that help generate employment, according to Mr. Kreishan.

This type of project entails buying equipment for handicrafts and farmers to help beneficiaries kick-start their business.

Mr. Kreishan said that funds are being invested and revenues collected in line with Islamic law, rather than through commercial banks for interest on deposits.

Australia to lobby Europe against French nuclear tests

SYDNEY (R) — The Australian government upped the ante in its row with France over nuclear testing Saturday, announcing a parliamentary delegation would go to Europe to seek support against France's nuclear policy.

In an open letter to the nation published in several major Australian newspapers, Prime Minister Paul Keating said the French government jeopardised hopes that the world would emerge from the cold war without a nuclear shadow hanging over it.

He said Pacific Islands Minister Gordon Bilney would lead a delegation to Europe in September to ensure Canberra's opposition to France's tests was fully understood.

The delegation aimed to turn European opposition to the French tests into political opposition, Mr. Bilney said. "It's a matter of building up and reinforcing the coalition of opposition to this decision by France, by talking to the main players in Europe," Mr. Bilney said in a radio interview.

Another delegation, led by the president of the Australian Senate, was to meet members of the European Parliament to discuss France's plans for eight underground nuclear tests in French Polynesia from September to May, Mr. Keating said.

"A central aim of our policy is to work with this international coalition, not only in

our opposition to French tests, but also on wider nuclear issues," Mr. Keating said.

He said Australia was negotiating with Japan to seek a United Nations resolution calling for a complete and immediate end to nuclear testing and that Australia would also make an oral submission to the International Court of Justice to register formal opposition to French tests.

Canberra and Paris have traded diplomatic swipes and warning of trade reprisals after the French government's June decision to resume the tests triggered a campaign of Australian anti-French protests, public outcry and official condemnation.

Australian protests against French nuclear tests flared Saturday to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombing of the Japanese city of Hiroshima.

In Brisbane, peace and environmental activists built a large white plastic mushroom cloud to symbolise the threat of nuclear destruction, while rallies were held in cities as far-flung as Alice Springs in the centre of the country to Darwin in the north.

Reflecting an anti-French mood in the country, which has seen business and diplomatic ties between the two nations tumble since June, several newspapers ran highly critical cartoons Saturday against French President Jacques Chirac.

The Australian newspaper's cartoonist depicted Mr. Chirac leading a parade of French military officers celebrating the nuclear tests while passing the sombre and grim faces of people at a shrine remembering the anniversary of Hiroshima.

Mr. Keating said Sunday's anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima was an appropriate moment to urge governments globally to strengthen efforts to bring about an end to nuclear testing.

"Hiroshima is a most powerful reminder that we must not waste that opportunity," he said.

The U.S. nuclear bombing of the Japanese city of Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, killed 140,000 people on impact. A second bomb on Nagasaki three days later killed 70,000 on impact.

Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans denied Saturday that his country wanted to drive France out of the Pacific and said Paris had made the charge to divert attention from its nuclear tests in French Polynesia.

In an interview with the French Le Figaro, Mr. Evans accused the French government of bluffing by announcing economic measures against Australia that were less than met the eye.

French government spokesman Francois Baroin had questioned the sincerity of Australia's indignation over President Jacques Chirac's decision to conduct a final seven or eight under-

ground tests in the South Pacific, saying that some countries wanted to force France out of the region.

"I categorically reject that interpretation," Mr. Evans said. "France plays a very positive role in the Pacific, notably in development aid. Neighbourly relations between Australia and the French Pacific territories are excellent."

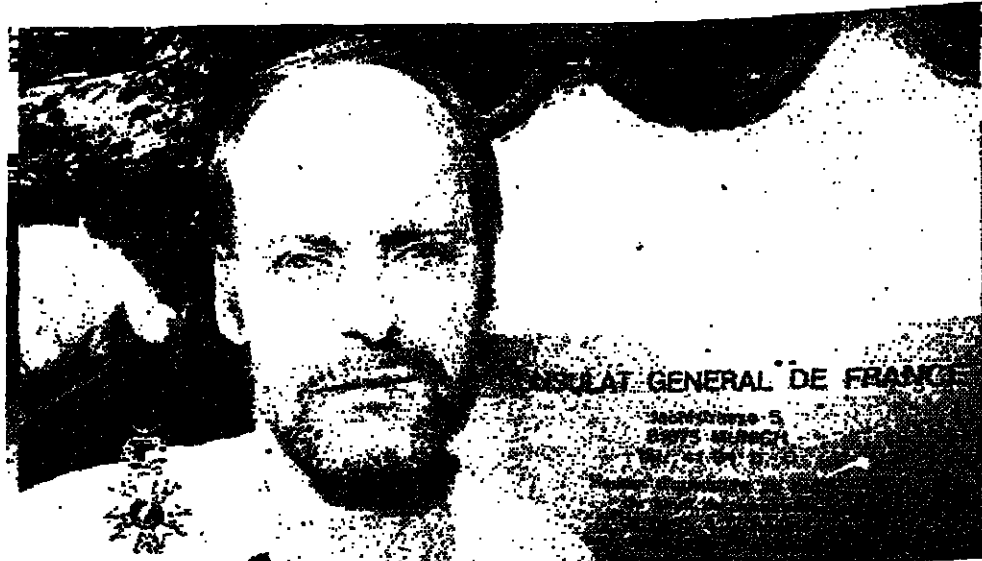
He said Australia realised that independence movements were in a minority in New Caledonia and French Polynesia and had no grounds to lecture France on the issue of independence.

"Mr. Baroin is using a scarecrow to distract attention from what should be the real debate. If public opinion in Australia or elsewhere, is so hostile, it's for a very simple reason: President Chirac's decision is a bad decision," he said.

The minister said France's announcement that it would re-examine coal and uranium purchases from Australia was largely bluff.

"Paris approach on purchases of Australian uranium is perfectly cynical," he said, noting that France would pocket a saving of about \$20 million if it bought uranium on the world market rather than respect a long-term contract with Canberra.

Since Australia was the world's biggest coal exporter, cancellation of French contracts would have only a marginal effect, he said.



Dietrich Hahn, grandson of Nobel Prize winner and discoverer of the nuclear fission Otto Hahn, holds the Order of the French Legion of Honour which was presented to his grandfather in 1959, in front of French consulate in Munich. Dietrich Hahn, 49, publicist and the

only grandson of the chemist who died in 1968, gave back the order and certificate to the French consul here to forward it to French President Jacques Chirac in protest against France's decision to resume nuclear tests in South Pacific (AFP photo)

British-born actress Ida Lupino dies

LOS ANGELES (R) — British-born actress Ida Lupino, who started in more than 60 films before carving out a pioneering role as a director, died of a stroke after a battle with colon cancer. She was 77.

Her spokeswoman said Lupino died Thursday night at her home in the Los Angeles suburb of Burbank with her sister and daughter at her side as well as several friends.

The actress had been ill for some time and had been released from hospital several days earlier, spokeswoman Mary Ann Anderson told Reuters.

The three-married Lupino is survived by her daughter Bridget Duff and sister Rita Lupino. She was most recently married to Howard Duff who died in 1990, seven years after they divorced.

True to life, she found fame playing headstrong and ambitious characters in a string of Warner Bros. Melodramas such as 1941's *High Sierra* opposite Humphrey Bogart and 1943's *The Hard Way*, for which she was named best actress by the New York film critics.

However, she was never nominated for an Academy Award. Overall she considered her Hollywood acting

career a failure, once referring to herself as a "poor man's Bette Davis."

By 1948, when she became an American citizen, she had largely given up acting to focus on producing and directing.

She will probably be best remembered as one of Hollywood's pioneering women directors, tackling subjects such as rape, pedophilia, bigamy and illegitimacy. She often wrote the screenplays and served as producer as well, a rare feat for women in 1950s Hollywood.

Lupino was born in the London suburb of Brixton in February 1918, into an acting family that originally hailed from Italy and emigrated to England in the 17th century. Her father was comedian Stanley Lupino and her mother actress Connie Emerald.

Her first role was a Lolita-type character aged 15 in Allan Dwan's *Her First Affair*. She arrived in Hollywood in 1933 playing minor ingenue roles on the Paramount lot until she got out of her contract after a brief bout of polio.

She came to the critics' attention in that studio's *The Light That Failed* opposite Ronald Colman in 1939. Warner Bros. Signed her to a

contract for a half-dozen years during which she turned in several memorable performances. A pianist, she was able to show off her under-used musical talents in such films as *Thank Your Lucky Stars* and *The Man I Love*.

With second husband Collier Young (she had previously been married to actor Louis Hayward), she set up a production company, Emerald Pictures, in 1949. She wrote scripts and soon began directing, making her official directing debut in 1950's *RKO-released The Young Lovers*, a movie about a young dancer afflicted by polio.

In the late 1950s she starred for three seasons in the sitcom *Mr. Adams and Eve*, as a Hollywood star who frequently scraps with her actor husband, played by Howard Duff. The two separated in real life in 1972.

She remained a prolific director and sometimes producer on television with more than 100 episode assignments ranging from *The Untouchables* to *Gilligan's Island*.

Lupino recently spent six months in a nursing home for physical therapy, but, according to Hollywood trade paper *daily Variety*, she was in talks to return to acting last May.

Andreotti takes to stage as trial looms

FERENTINO, Italy (R) — Former Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti, who goes on trial on mafia charges next month, warmed up for the fight of his life by taking the stage as a lawyer defending an authoritarian medieval Pope.

The seven-times prime minister and current life senator was the main attraction at a Friday night theatre production that recounted the stormy pontificate of Pope Boniface VIII, who reigned from 1294 to 1303.

Pope Boniface is one of the most controversial popes in history because he is said to have agitated behind the scenes to force the abdication of his predecessor Celestine V, and to have bribed cardinals to elect him.

In the Divine Comedy, the poet Dante branded Pope Boniface "the fox" and consigned him to hell. Mr. Andreotti, a political wheeler-dealer for almost half a century, was also been

called "the fox" by detractors.

Pope Boniface's pontificate was marked by a struggle with emerging European monarchies, particularly France, over the extent of papal authority on the continent.

After actors read from the Divine Comedy and sang medieval madrigals, Mr. Andreotti, sitting on a red damask-backed throne with a papal robe and rod at his feet, delivered a spirited hour-long defence of Pope Boniface.

Another senator defended Sciarra Colonna, an Italian nobleman aligned with France who tried to arrest the Pope.

Mr. Andreotti won his case when a jury made up of an historian, a journalist and a Roman Catholic monsignor ruled that while Pope Boniface was no saint, Sciarra Colonna was worse because he used treachery and violence to try to depose a Pope.

"Let's not mix the sacred with the profane," Mr. Andreotti, an expert on church and medieval history, told a reporter who asked whether the "victory" had helped him develop a defence strategy for his upcoming mafia trial.

He brushed off a reporter who asked if he was preparing psychologically for when he goes on trial in Sicily on charges of having been the mafia's chief protector for decades.

Mr. Andreotti has denied all the charges, which are built on testimony of mafia turncoats. He says they are part of a mob plot to punish him for crackdowns on organised crime by the Christian Democrat-led coalition governments he headed.

His judicial troubles did not surface officially at an outdoor theatrical event, part of a summer festival in the rural Ciociaria area south of Rome. But next month's trial in the Sicilian capital Palermo seemed to hang in the air.

Simpson prosecutor reveals new DNA tests; judge questions admissibility

LOS ANGELES (AP) — An O.J. Simpson prosecutor unveiled new DNA results Friday tentatively linking Simpson's blood and that of murder victim Ronald Goldman to Simpson's Bronco. But jurors may never hear about it.

The judge said the tests, which bolster other evidence now under defence attack, were started too late and might not be admissible in Simpson's trial.

"I still have the concern about the delay in the starting of the testing and whether or not any of that RFLP results will be admissible before this jury," said Superior Court Judge Lance Ito. "That's an issue that has yet to be resolved."

The judge's remarks indicated he permitted the prosecution to go ahead with RFLP tests on mixed blood samples from the Bronco earlier this year, but the California Department of Justice Lab delayed starting testing "for a significant period of time, approaching two months."

Some RFLP tests can take up to three months or more to complete, and the prosecution's results have dribbled in throughout the case. Many were presented to jurors last spring, while others, such as those on the Bronco blood, are ongoing.

Defence attorney Barry Scheck said the defence has had no access to the new tests and argued they should not be

admitted. Prosecutor Rockne Harmon countered that RFLP testing, considered more reliable than the PCR process, takes longer and results are only now appearing, gradually in chemical strips.

"We have now produced a three-probe RFLP match consistent with the blood of Mr. Simpson and the blood of Ronald Goldman," Mr. Harmon told the judge. "We will continue to probe it."

"That's what they fear," he said of the defence. Simpson, a former football star who stayed in the celebrity spotlight as an actor and TV sports commentator, has pleaded innocent to the June 12, 1994, murders of his ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and Goldman, one of her friends.

Mr. Harmon and fellow prosecutor George Clarke wanted to use the results in a hypothetical question to defence witness John Gerdes, who has dismissed PCR tests performed on the same Bronco blood as untrustworthy due to contamination and sloppy evidence handling.

Judge Ito refused to allow the question and suggested that the new tests could be attacked on similar grounds as PCR: that the blood had been exposed to the environment for so long that it was degraded and possibly contaminated by the time it reached the laboratory.

Meanwhile, Mr. Clarke

put Dr. Gerdes through a rigorous cross-examination but drew only a few concessions from the calm, methodical microbiologist.

Dr. Gerdes acknowledged that some blood samples could not have been contaminated by sloppy Los Angeles police technicians because the DNA material was extracted by two outside laboratories: "Cellmark" Diagnostics and the State Justice Department.

Dr. Gerdes repeatedly tried to interject that police could have contaminated the samples before the DNA was extracted, such as when criminalists soaked up blood on swatches at the crime scene.

Mr. Clarke pointed out that the samples from Simpson's Bronco were collected not by rank and file technicians but by the LAPD's lab director.

"That may be," said Dr. Gerdes, but he added, "in my opinion none of the individuals are collecting the materials in a manner that a microbiologist would consider safe. They're all too risky."

Mr. Clarke objected to many of Dr. Gerdes' answers as non-responsive, and the judge ordered the jury to disregard several of them. Judge Ito expressed impatience at Dr. Gerdes' tone, snapping at one point, "doctor, answer the question."

Japan still divided over cabinet reshuffle

TOKYO (AFP) — Key Japanese ministers were undecided Saturday whether to agree to stay on in their posts as requested by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama in his planned cabinet reshuffle, it was reported Saturday.

Yoshiro Koizumi, who has been asked to remain as foreign minister, told the Japan Broadcasting Corp. "I'd like to think about various things, not only about myself, before making a final decision."

Mr. Murayama has pledged to carry out the reshuffle in a bid to shore up his shaky coalition following its poor showing in July 23 upper house elections.

The cabinet met late into the night Friday to discuss the reshuffle. Mr. Koizumi, head of the powerful Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), had originally agreed to Mr. Murayama's request to stay on but then changed his mind and asked for time to reflect.

It is widely believed that Mr. Koizumi wants to step down as foreign minister in order to concentrate on securing his re-election as party leader in the LDP's presidential race in September.

Trinidad capital under state of emergency amid political fracas

PORT-OF-SPAIN (AFP) — The capital of the tiny Caribbean Republic of Trinidad and Tobago was under a state of emergency and the speaker under house arrest amid a widening political fracas pitting the government against the legislature.

Legislators were still debating late Friday a measure, which was expected to pass by a simple majority, to remove the speaker of the House of Representatives from his post.

Prime Minister Patrick Manning declared the three-month state of emergency Thursday on the capital city of some 300,000 residents and placed Speaker Osoah Seapaul under house arrest.

Mr. Manning feared Ms. Seapaul, a woman who was chosen for the legislative post four years ago, was trying to whittle away the government's majority in parliament by suspending ministers.

Ms. Seapaul's brother, Public Utilities Minister Ralph Maraj, resigned from the cabinet earlier in the day to protest his sister's treatment, although he retained

his parliament seat. Residents went about their business as usual and no restrictions were imposed on the press despite the unfolding political drama and pounding rain. No arrests, demonstrations, or protests were reported.

The state of emergency sharply curtails individual liberties, bans public meetings, and empowers police to detain suspects indefinitely without charge.

In a statement to parliament before debate began, Attorney-General Keith Sobion accused Ms. Seapaul of "arbitrary and capricious" actions and said the state of emergency aimed "to prevent the systematic overthrow of the duly elected government."

"The government is concerned now that we as a country shall return to a normal state in the shortest possible time," he said, pledging to uphold democracy.

"It is no part of our tradition that any person or group of persons... should seek to control or overturn our par-

liament and our other democratic institutions," Mr. Sobion said.

"Any such action must be firmly resisted by right-thinking citizens," he said. Police also tried unsuccessfully to arrest Yasin Abu Bakr, head of the black Muslim separatist group Jamaat Al Muslemeen, for making threats against the government.

Mr. Abu Bakr led a failed coup here in July 1990 in which 27 people died.

The struggle between the prime minister and the House speaker began in June, when Ms. Seapaul claimed a mechanic had swindled some \$17,000 from her.

Ms. Seapaul took the matter to court, where the government claimed she committed perjury. The case was dismissed because her evidence was uncorroborated by independent evidence.

The government asked Ms. Seapaul, the first female speaker in Trinidad and Tobago, to resign on grounds her credibility had been irreparably damaged.

Clinton announces restrictions on lobbyists

WASHINGTON (AFP) — President Bill Clinton sought to turn up the pressure Friday for political reform, announcing plans to require lobbyists on the federal government to register and disclose who they represent.

The initiative was clearly calculated to draw a contrast with the Republicans in Congress, whom Mr. Clinton accused of dragging their feet on campaign finance and lobbying reform while handing over the legislative process to lobbyists.

"Delay, debate and division, that's the same old thing," Mr. Clinton said of Republicans in the House of Representatives. "They won't put lobbyists in their proper place in our governmental structure."

At Mr. Clinton's side as he spoke in the White House Oval Office were historian Doris Kearns Goodwin and John Gardner, a former cabinet secretary and founder of Common Cause, the liberal good government group.

They were invited to the White House to discuss political reforms as "the kind of people I would appoint" to a bi-partisan commission on political reform agreed to in late June, Mr. Clinton said.

The idea of a commission

to remove the issue from the partisan battleground was sprung by a member of the audience at a picnic in New Hampshire, during an impromptu debate between Mr. Clinton and House Speaker Newt Gingrich.

The two men shook hands on the idea, but Mr. Clinton complained that even though he wrote a letter to Mr. Gingrich putting forth his ideas on how to do it "that moment of optimism gave way to five weeks of silence."

Asked about it at a news conference, Mr. Gingrich said his work to overhaul Medicare, the state insurance for the elderly, was all he had time for until the fall.

"Now, if you just want some PR gimmick to get up and bash somebody, you can do that in a half hour. But if you want to seriously get to real campaign reform, it takes time."

"We have not had the mental energy and the time this summer to do anything except the appropriations bills and Medicare," he said.

Mr. Clinton retorted: "It takes no energy at all... All he has to do is what he said he'd do when he shook hands with me — let's set up a commission."

Meanwhile, Mr. Clinton

said he would issue executive orders barring lobbyists from dealing with the federal government without disclosing the interests they represent.

"Right now lobbyist can operate in secret. They can lawfully conceal who they work for, what loopholes or contracts or regulations they are seeking to pass, or what actions they are seeking to stop. And lobbying of the executive branch isn't disclosed at all."

Under the new restriction... entities spending more than \$20,000 a year on lobbying activities would have to register on a semiannual basis.

They would have to give the name of the lobbyist, say who their client is, the issues they seek to influence, and provide a good faith estimate of how much they spend on lobbying the executive and Congress.

Mr. Clinton, however, stop short of taking unilateral steps on campaign financing practices on grounds, arguing that to do so would give the Republicans an unfair advantage.

The sentiment that the average person is powerless to influence a Washington dominated by special in-

terests has pervaded recent elections, including the November mid-term elections that swept Republicans into the majority in Congress.

Mr. Gardner called the role of money in the political process "a cancer eating at the vitals of our government" and "a fatal addiction" that many members of congress cannot break.

"Americans have always believed in the consent of the governed. It now looks as though we're talking about the consent of the donors," he said.

Ms. Kearns Goodwin also said the "scurrying power of money within our political process is one of the most damaging forces in our national life."

"Money gets the individuals into the door. Money revises legislation. Money restrains the enforcement of laws. Money has a direct impact on the substance of almost every piece of legislation," she said.

"It is little wonder, the more I think about it, that our citizens are disenchanted with politics and government. This process has corrupted both parties," she said.

Forgotten forceps found in man's belly after 10 years

CAIRO (AFP) — An Egyptian cab driver complaining of intense stomach pains was discovered to have a 20 centimetre-long (8-inch) pair of forceps in his gut left by an operation 10 years earlier, a paper reported here. Mahmud Ahmad Abdul Salam was first operated in 1985 for kidney stones in a private clinic in Cairo, the government daily Al-Ahram reported in its early Saturday edition. Six years later he was struck with renewed pain which he treated unsuccessfully for four years with painkillers. When he finally reported to a hospital, X-rays revealed the instrument forgotten in his stomach cavity had destroyed one of his kidneys. "Abdul Salam" is now waiting for an operation to remove the forceps, the paper said.

French actress charged with drug possession

PARIS (AP) — Sultry French actress Beatrice Dalle, convicted of shoplifting from a jewellery store three years ago, was charged with possession of heroin and cocaine, and ordered to see a doctor. Miss Dalle, 30, was charged with "complicity in use and passing on drugs." She had been arrested Tuesday evening at her apartment with four other people, two of them foreigners in France illegally. Police first arrested two suspected drug dealers on the ground floor of the building, then discovered a few grammes of the drugs in Miss Dalle's apartment along with material used to "cut" or prepare heroin. But she denied she was dealing in the drugs, and said she had the substances for her own use. Miss Dalle created a sensation with the steamy character she played in her cinematic debut nine years ago in 37.2 Le Matin. She was convicted in January 1992 for shoplifting a necklace from a Paris jeweller after being caught in the act, and given a suspended prison sentence of six months and fined 20,000 francs (\$4,200). She said at the time she took it because she was depressed. She has just finished filming *Desire* with director Bernard Marot co-star Jean-Paul Belmondo.

Danish national gets taken twice by 'prostitute'

COLOMBO (AFP) — A Sri Lankan man posing as a female prostitute had sex with a Danish national and turned out to be a straight thief, police said Friday. The tourist from Denmark had picked up the "prostitute" from an intersection in the capital Thursday but discovered when they undressed that "she" was actually a man, police said. However, the man persuaded the Dane to go to bed with him. The following morning, the prostitute had vanished with his camera, watch and other valuables. Police said many thieves have taken up to prostitution and are usually disguised as women.

Woman, 43, gives birth without knowing she was pregnant

ANCONA, Italy (AFP) — A 43-year-old woman who gave birth to a baby weighing more than three kilograms (6.6 pounds) was unaware she had been pregnant, hospital sources said. The woman, who already had two children, arrived in the morning complaining of severe pain in her belly and gave birth shortly thereafter in the hospital emergency room, said a source at the Chiavarella Hospital here. The woman said that she had gained four or five kilos (nine to 12 pounds) in the previous nine months and had continued to menstruate. She had attributed any changes to hormonal imbalances due to menopause.

Goat claimed by 2 people leaves police confused

NEW DELHI (AP) — A woman complained to police in a southern Indian city that her neighbour, a butcher, had stolen her pet goat. But the butcher showed a receipt to prove he had bought the animal at a village fair. A police officer confused by the claims, tried to solve it by offering to pay the butcher and asking him to return the animal to the woman, the Press Trust of India news agency reported Friday.

Hiroshima

HIROSHIMA — In a ceremony to mark the 50th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama made a rare public apology for the war. He said the war was a tragedy for all people and that Japan should never again resort to war. He also expressed his condolences to the victims of the bombing. The ceremony was held at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. Mr. Murayama said that the bombing of Hiroshima was a terrible tragedy and that Japan should never again resort to war. He also expressed his condolences to the victims of the bombing. The ceremony was held at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.

Russia cou

RUSSIA — The Russian government has announced that it will be withdrawing its troops from the Balkans. This move is seen as a significant step towards reducing Russian military presence in the region. The announcement came during a meeting of the Russian Foreign Ministry. It was noted that the decision was made in consultation with the United Nations. The Russian government has long been a member of the UN and has often supported peacekeeping efforts. This move is expected to be welcomed by the international community.

White Ho

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Some 10,000 demonstrators start a "Peace March" at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, two days before the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony commemorating the

50th anniversary of the atomic bombing on Aug. 6, 1945 (AFP photo)

Hiroshima mayor to give Japan war apology

HIROSHIMA, Japan (R) — In a surprise twist on the 50th anniversary of the world's first atomic bombing, the mayor of Hiroshima plans to break with the tradition Sunday and formally "apologise" for Japan's actions in World War II.

City officials said because of the symbolism of the 50th anniversary and heightened awareness of atomic weapons after France's decision to resume nuclear testing, Mayor Takeshi Hiraoka wanted to make a gesture that would cross national boundaries and persuade the world to abolish nuclear weapons.

They said in using the long-shunned word "apology" in reference to Japan's World War II actions, Mr. Hiraoka hoped it would give younger people a better perspective on history and persuade them against nuclear weapons.

Mr. Hiraoka's action is not without some danger because of feared backlash from ultra-nationalists who believe an apology dishonours the memory of Japan's war dead.

In 1989, a fanatical right-winger shot and wounded the mayor of Nagasaki who broke another taboo by publicly stating that wartime Emperor Hirohito bore responsibility for the war.

The Japanese government is still loathe to offer a straightforward apology. In a parliamentary resolution meant to atone for Japan's role in the war adopted last month, the wording used was "deep reflection" not "apology".

On the bomb itself, most Japanese think the United States should apologise for the atomic bombs but Americans do not agree, said a media survey released Saturday.

The TBS-CBS Poll of 3,000 adults in the two countries said 89 per cent of Japanese felt it was morally wrong to use the bomb and 69 per cent wanted an apology. In the United States, 76 per cent of respondents said there was no need for an apology.

On the eve of Sunday's anniversary events, Hiroshima overflowed with peace activists, children and tourists drawn to the place where the bomb dropped at 8:15 a.m. on Aug. 6, 1945, killing 140,000 people on impact and changing the world forever.

The tens of thousands of Japanese and foreigners arriving in the city promised to make the ceremonies the biggest in Hiroshima's history.

For the first time, Hiroshi-

ma invited 20 foreign A-bomb survivors from 11 countries to the ceremonies, including a person living in North Korea.

About 13,000 guests will listen to speeches by Mr. Hiraoka, Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama and representatives of children during the hour-long ceremonies which start at 8:00 a.m. on Sunday.

The influence on this year's commemoration of the French decision to resume its nuclear testing in the South Pacific in September showed up in the many informal anti-nuclear events already in progress in the city.

In small marches, prayer recitals and other events, placards in French were evident for the first time.

About 500 activists opposing President Jacques Chirac's decision staged a sit-in at the peace memorial park, including Marie-Francoise Mendez, leader of the French Green Party.

On Friday, Japan's parliament unanimously passed a resolution calling on France and China to halt nuclear tests. The tests, the document said, threaten both the environment and treaties designed to curtail such

weapons.

Japanese authorities estimate there are still about 300,000 survivors of the atomic bombs that fell on Hiroshima and three days later on Nagasaki, where about 70,000 died on impact.

Nearly 100,000 survivors, most of them in their 60s and 70s, still live in Hiroshima, now a bustling city of 1.3 million completely rebuilt from the ashes of the atomic bomb.

A memorial service was held in Yokohama Saturday for British Commonwealth prisoners of war who died at detention camps in Japan during World War II. Kyodo News Service said.

Some 90 people, including diplomats from Britain, Australia and New Zealand, attended a Christian ritual at the Commonwealth cemetery for war dead, Kyodo said.

Air Force Group Capt. Alan MacGregor of the British embassy attended the service, expressing deep gratitude to Japanese promoters for organising the event.

More than 1,700 British Commonwealth servicemen who died at the detention camps in Japan during the war are buried at the cemetery.

Sri Lanka rebels issue death threats to tourists

COLOMBO (Agencies) — A shadowy Tamil militant group which claimed responsibility for a car bomb blast at Colombo Airport in June has again threatened to kill tourists and foreign investors in Sri Lanka.

Ellalan Force said it "won't be ready to show any mercy" unless the armed forces stopped "killing Tamils" in the north.

The letter, which was dated July 30 and reached Reuters Saturday, denounced the current military offensive in the rebel-held Jaffna peninsula and the bombing of a church compound there.

It said it would not allow foreign investors, tourists, flights or ships into the country unless the offensive stopped.

On Friday, troops based in territory captured in Operation Leap Forward against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) launched a "limited operation," killing or wounding at least 50 rebels, the military said Saturday.

On Wednesday and Thursday, naval patrol craft attacked 16 Tiger vessels in separate incidents, destroying six of them, the military said. Ellalan Force in its letter "vehemently condemned" allegations it was connected to the LTTE, which has been at war fighting for a separate homeland in the north and east since 1983.

The group has many times warned foreigners to keep out of the country and on June 9 took responsibility for a failed car-bomb attempt at Colombo Airport.

"Due to a technical failure, the bomb didn't go off," it

said in a statement. "You are all lucky."

It threatened to set off "massive bombs" in Colombo last month unless a commission was set up to investigate the killing of Tamils in the east of the island. A few small explosions were recorded in the city, but there were no injuries.

It also claimed responsibility for a spate of small hotel bombings in Colombo last year in which there were no injuries.

The military said it took the group seriously. "They have proved they have explosives and can do something in Colombo," a spokesman said. "Our intelligence people know about them."

"We can't allow any foreign investors to come to Sri Lanka," the letter said. It told foreigners not to import Sri Lankan goods, not to build hotels in Sri Lanka or be involved in any co-production or development projects.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga Thursday announced a devolution package for the country's minority Tamils, stressing the war was against the LTTE and not the Tamil people.

The bombing of St. Peter's Church compound on the first day of Operation Leap Forward on July 9 has become a stepping stone in controversy. It was first reported that the church was destroyed, and then it was found that the building was intact.

Both the LTTE and the International Committee of the Red Cross have blamed the air force and the government agent in Jaffna says 122 civilians were killed.

Mrs. Kumaratunga said Thursday it was probably the work of the LTTE who were firing mortar shells in that direction. The military says it does not know who was responsible for the attack but is investigating.

Ellalan Force also said it partially blamed the LTTE for the casualties at the compound for telling the people its anti-aircraft capabilities were enough to stop any air attack.

The group has long been believed to be a cover for the LTTE in order not to embarrass Western countries where the LTTE have offices.

Meanwhile, troops moved out from Alaveddi, within newly regained territory, at first light Friday and "overcame resistance without much effort" with the loss of five men, a defence ministry said. Twenty soldiers were wounded.

The forces, backed by air and naval cover, advanced to Chunakam before returning to Alaveddi, the military said.

Radio transmissions by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) said the fighting lasted for eight hours and that 2,400 troops had been deployed. Tiger Radio said the LTTE had lost four cadres, including three women.

At the same time, the armed forces fired shells from their bases at Palali and Mandaitivu Island, the radio said.

A pro-government newspaper said Saturday Sri Lanka will likely hold elections if the latest government plan to end the island's separatist war fails.

The sweeping political reforms proposed by President

Kumaratunga to resolve the ethnic conflict must win a two-thirds majority in parliament.

The president planned to dissolve parliament and call fresh polls if she was unable to get the vital backing of the opposition United National Party (UNP), the pro-government Ravaya weekly said in editions to be released Sunday.

An advance copy obtained Saturday said the government believed it could improve on its one-seat majority in new elections, making the peace issue central to its campaign.

Mrs. Kumaratunga declined to answer questions about election plans.

"We will answer that at the right time," she said.

In a separate development, mystery shrouded the recovery of 16 bodies from lakes in and around Colombo in the last three months.

Police refuse to say anything on the identity of those killed or the motive behind the crime. The victims are men in the age group 35-40.

In the latest incident, two highly decomposed bodies were fished out Friday from the Diyawanna Lake near parliament building, police said.

Early this week, police found three bodies, two in the Hamilton Canal north of the city, and one in Bolgoda Lake where 11 decomposed bodies were found in May and June.

Bolgoda Lake is a popular tourist resort, 25 kilometres (15 miles) south of the Sri Lankan capital.

Some of the victims had mutilated sexual organs, while some were found with their hands tied, police said.

Kashmir militants ease demands, say hostages sick

SRINAGAR, India (R) — Kashmiri militants holding five Western hostages lowered their demands Saturday and said three ailing captives could die unless they quickly received better medical treatment.

A statement delivered to an international news organisation said the Al Faran militant group now wanted India to release 15 jailed separatists instead of 21 in exchange for the captive tourists.

Al Faran said it would not release the hostages unless its demands were met.

"However, it has made its demands flexible so that instead of 21 prisoners it is now demanding the release of only 15," said the statement, written in Urdu and dated Aug. 5.

At the outset of the month-long hostage crisis Al Faran demanded that New Delhi free 21 separatists who had been jailed for fighting against Indian rule in the troubled region.

Police and hospital officials say more than 20,000 people have died in the five-year-old rebellion.

The Al Faran group also issued a tape cassette on which a man who identifies

himself as American Donald Hutchings said he and Briton Keith Mangan had been shot in a clash between their captors and the Indian army, and that Mr. Mangan was in a "very critical" condition.

The militants attached two colour photographs. One, with Mr. Mangan's name on the back, showed a man lying down with blood oozing from a bandage around his chest and shoulders.

The other photograph, with Mr. Hutchings' name on the back, showed a man with blood near his waist. There were no dates on the pictures.

Mr. Hutchings said on a poor quality tape recording that he had been shot during an Indian army attack on the militants while in the mountains. He did not say when the attack occurred.

"I do not have the strength to speak much," he said. "But I think Keith is very critical with many wounds and a broken leg."

On July 21 Al Faran said two of the hostages had been injured in a clash with Indian security forces. India denied there had been any fighting.

Two days later the militant group, which has periodically sent messages to news orga-

nisations, said one of the wounded hostages was in a serious condition.

"We have no medicine. The time is very dangerous for us," Mr. Hutchings said on the tape-recorded message, which was not dated.

The Al Faran statement said two foreign tourists whom it did not identify were injured in a clash with the Indian army, and one was in a critical condition. German Dirk Hasert was also ill, it said.

"The condition of the three is deteriorating by the day. They have stopped eating anything which has further affected their health," it said.

"If they don't get better medical care immediately, they may even die, for which the government will be responsible."

"If the governments of the respective countries want the safe release of their nationals, they should put pressure on the Indian government," Mr. Mangan and Mr.

Hutchings were captured on July 4 along with Briton Paul Wells and American John Childs while trekking near Pahalgam, 90 kilometres from Srinagar, summer capital of the northern Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Al Faran militant group abducted Mr. Hasert and Hans-Christian Ostro of Norway four days later, hours after Mr. Childs managed to escape unharmed.

Some 5,000 heavily guarded Hindus defied death threats from Muslim guerrillas Saturday and embarked on an annual pilgrimage to a mountain cave in Kashmir.

The pilgrims left Jammu, winter capital of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, under tight security ordered by authorities to guard against attacks from Muslim militants.

The Harkat-ul-Ansar separatist group has warned Hindus not to participate in the pilgrimage and claimed responsibility for two bomb blasts which killed 18 people in Jammu last month.

The group's threat was in protest against the 1992 demolition of a 16th century mosque by Hindu extremists in the northern Indian city of Ayodhya.

On Wednesday, a paramilitary trooper was killed when militants detonated a land mine on the route leading to the cave, sacred to the Hindu god, Shiva.

Russia could stop Chechenya pullout over PoWs

GROZNY, Russia (R) — The commander of Kremlin forces in Chechenya said Saturday his troops would not start pulling out of the separatist region until rebels had handed over a full list of Russian prisoners they were holding.

"There will be no withdrawal of Russian troops until this issue is resolved," Anatoly Romanov told Reuters in the regional capital Grozny.

His comments seemed a clear attempt to put more pressure on the Chechens, who signed a military agreement last Sunday to stop the fighting. Gen. Romanov said there had been just five attacks on his troops overnight, but no one was injured.

The rebels have given the

Russians a list containing just seven names, while ITAR-TASS news agency quoted Mr. Romanov as saying he feared the rebels were holding up to 250 prisoners.

"I do not know whether the Chechen side is ready for this. On our side there are no problems," said Mr. Romanov, under constant pressure from a group of several dozen Russian mothers in Grozny who are frantically trying to find their missing sons.

"All Chechens and Russian people are waiting for this, the main point, the exchange of prisoners. This will immediately reduce the tension and people will start to trust each other and start disarming," Gen. Romanov said.

But Khodzha Khmed Yerikhanov, chief Chechen

negotiator at talks to end the bloody eight-month conflict, denied he was concealing information from Gen. Romanov.

"The Chechen side is only holding seven Russian prisoners. All the others were released earlier and the Russian side should have a look in their own concentration camps where thousands of Chechen civilians are being held," he told Reuters.

"If Russians know about prisoners the Chechens are holding, why do they not give us this information? We have neither the place for the food to keep many Russian prisoners."

Mr. Yerikhanov said many Russian captives had been simply handed over to relatives earlier in the conflict and had therefore never offi-

cially been removed from the missing list.

"In any case, this issue should not block all the other questions such as disarmament and withdrawal of Russian troops."

General Dmitry Volkogonov, head of President Boris Yeltsin's commission on prisoners, said Friday the rebels were holding at least 57 Russian servicemen.

Mr. Yeltsin threw his weight behind the military deal in a televised address to the nation Thursday.

He said the military deal was the first success of peace negotiations which have yet to broach the trickiest issue — Chechenya's constitutional status. Some rebels still demand full independence, which is total anathema to the Kremlin.

White House threatens veto of defence bill

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Clinton administration has threatened to veto the 1996 defence authorisation bill unless "unacceptable provisions" for a nationwide missile defence are deleted or sharply modified.

"In our view, these provisions, if enacted into law, would effectively abrogate the ABM treaty," National Security Adviser Anthony Lake said in a letter to the Senate leadership Friday.

Meanwhile, however, the Senate dealt the White House another setback in the nuclear weapons arena. By a 56-44 vote it defeated an amendment to bar small-scale underground test explosions.

Sen. Strom Thurmond chairman of Senate Armed Services Committee, said the tests were "the only tool left to assess the capability of the shrinking nuclear stockpile."

"We need to do this," Sen. Thurmond said. "We're living in a dangerous world."

The veto threat was fortified by the close votes on so-called hydrocarbon tests — those with a yield of less than 4 pounds (1.8 kilograms). TNT equivalent — and on an antimissile defence, which was approved 51-49 Thursday night. Overriding a presidential veto requires two-thirds of the Senate and House.

"Let me be clear," Mr.

Kake said, "Unless the unacceptable missile defence provisions are deleted or revised and other changes are made to the bill, bringing it more in line with the administration's policy, the president's advisers will recommend that he veto the bill."

Earlier, Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota said the Senate's endorsement of a missile defence plan flew in the face of the 1972 anti-ballistic missile treaty with Russia and could touch off another arms race.

"If you loved the cold war you'd love this defence bill," Sen. Daschle told reporters as the Senate resumed debate on the measure. "I can't for the life of me understand why the Republicans want to go back to the bad old days of arms escalation."

A final vote on the bill was stalled late Friday night when Democrats indicated they still planned to offer some 60 amendments.

"It's clear to the leader that there is no intention to pass this bill," said a frustrated Senate majority leader Bob Dole, who postponed further debate on the measure until Saturday afternoon.

The State Department accused the bill's proponents of usurping the executive branch's authority regarding treaties and said action would

have the effect of abrogating the accord.

"We were deeply disturbed by this vote," spokesman David Johnson said.

The treaty, which sharply limits defenses against missiles as a way of discouraging a nuclear attack, is a bedrock of strategic stability, the official said.

The theory behind the treaty is that a potential aggressor would hold fire rather than risk a devastating retaliatory attack — one that could not be prevented for a lack of an antimissile defence.

The Clinton administration adamantly opposes the plan to build a nationwide network of antiballistic missile defences, and Sen. Daschle said he would urge the president to veto the measure.

The Senate had voted to retain language in its 1996 defence authorisation bill that directs the Pentagon to set up a multi-site missile defence system by 2003 and unilaterally defines the kind of antimissile systems that should be allowed under the 1972 ABM treaty.

Senate Republicans, while denying they were violating the accord, said it was time to reassess the cold war treaty, which left both the United States and the Soviet Union vulnerable to nuclear attack.

concept known as mutual assured destruction.

"The bottom line is that the bill recognises ... that mutual assured destruction, the doctrine underlying the ABM treaty, is not a suitable basis for stability in a multipolar world," Sen. Dole said.

A second setback followed Friday with defeat on an amendment to prevent hydrocarbon tests, which advocates say can help ensure the potency of the plutonium part of enriched U.S. nuclear weapons.

Mr. Clinton has continued a moratorium ordered by former President Bush and all U.S. nuclear weapons tests while pursuing negotiations for a worldwide accord. Some Pentagon and State Department officials want to conduct some tests to ensure the U.S. nuclear arsenal is reliable. Opponents say computers serve that purpose.

By a vote of 51-46, senators refused to trim an additional \$7 billion from the overall bill. And, they overwhelmingly defeated, 70-26, a burden-sharing amendment requiring the nation's European allies to shoulder a greater share of the cost of stationing U.S. troops there.

Among the amendments agreed to late Friday was a one-year moratorium on the United States' use of land mines.

Yeltsin may return to work tomorrow

MOSCOW (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin may return to work in the Kremlin Monday after a mild heart attack, a spokesman said Thursday.

"He is hurrying to get back to work. Monday is one of the latest options for his return to the Kremlin," the

spokesman at the Presidential Press Services told Reuters.

"He is feeling well. He has fully completed his course of rehabilitation," the spokesman said.

He did not say which, if any, other dates were being considered for Mr. Yeltsin's

return to the Kremlin. Interfax News Agency quoted sources in the presidential administration as saying he would be back at work Monday.

Mr. Yeltsin, 64, was taken to hospital on July 11 with what he later described as a mild heart attack. He has

already left hospital and has been recovering in a sanatorium just outside Moscow.

Mr. Yeltsin has been working from the sanatorium and showed no visible after-effects of his heart problems when he gave a televised speech to the nation Thursday.

5 killed in new Karachi wave of violence

KARACHI (Agencies) — At least five people were killed Saturday in a new wave of political violence that has struck the Pakistani port city of Karachi, bringing the death toll this month to more than 30, police said.

They said the bullet-riddled bodies of two unidentified young men were found in the eastern Koranhi area. They had been stuffed inside sacks with their hands and feet bound.

Three deaths were also reported in east, west and central districts. The political affiliations of the victims were not immediately known.

Witnesses said parliamentary Rangers and police cordoned off parts of the Koranhi area early Saturday morning and searched houses for the recovery of weapons and arrest of militants.

The government blames most of the violence on the

Mohajir National Movement (MQM) which speaks for the Urdu-speaking Mohajirs who migrated from India at partition in 1947.

Newspapers said there were more than 100 arrests in several raids at the houses of MQM workers and activists in various parts of the city.

Gunfire incidents were also reported in the volatile central and eastern districts, considered to be MQM strongholds.

The government wants the MQM to give up arms, surrender activists wanted for various crimes and clarify its political policies.

The fresh wave of violence began after four MQM activists were killed in a police encounter Wednesday.

More than 1,250 people have been killed in political and sectarian violence in Karachi so far this year compared to 800 last year.

The three mutilated bodies

found Saturday were a warning to would-be police informers, police said.

They said the bodies contained notes identifying them as informers and warning people against collaborating with police.

The slaughter of alleged informers has risen dramatically since July when police launched an operation to flush out ethnic militants from Karachi's violent western and central neighbourhoods, police said.

They said at least 20 bodies have been found in the past month, all of them containing notes identifying them as police collaborators.

On Friday the bodies of two more alleged informers were found, chopped up into several pieces and stuffed in the trunk of a car abandoned in Karachi's troubled Orangi district.

Also Friday six people

were killed in separate incidents elsewhere in the city.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's government has been unable to stop the violence. Earlier police said they were stymied by a lack of cooperation from people in the affected neighbourhoods.

In July Mr. Bhutto ordered Karachi's security force to regain control of neighbourhoods it had lost to ethnic militants, who had dug trenches and taken up positions on rooftops.

Thousands of weapons were confiscated in the police operation and dozens of alleged militants killed, police said.

Last week Interior Minister Nasrullah Babar told reporters police had restored calm to several neighbourhoods largely because people had begun to speak out. He didn't explain why the change of heart.

Features

JORDAN TIMES, SUNDAY, AUGUST 6, 1995 7

Tell Jawa: A fortified Iron Age town on the edge of the Ammonite kingdom

Text and photos
By Rami G. Khouri
Special to the Jordan Times

SIX SEASONS of excavations at Tell Jawa, south-east of Amman, directed by Canadian scholar P.M. Michele Daviau of Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada, have uncovered the substantial standing remains of a large town that was heavily fortified and extensively used during the Iron Age period, some 3,000 years ago — but a town that may soon disappear forever, because of the complexities of reconciling the conservation of our ancient heritage with the demands of contemporary urban expansion.

Tell Jawa is located on a strategic hilltop in the growing residential suburb of Yaddoua, about a kilometre due east from Kan Zaman. It enjoys fine panoramic views in all directions. The airport tower is visible to the south, Madaba to the west, and the Amra Hotel to the north. This strategic position along the southern flank of the ancient kingdom of Ammon probably explains why it was initially settled in the early Iron Age, circa 1200-1100 BC, and why it was heavily fortified with a massive town wall in the Iron Age II period, around 900-650 BC.

The site was abandoned sometime in the 7th or 6th century BC, at the end of the Iron Age, and was not reoccupied until the Umayyad period in the late 7th century AD — at least this is the site's occupational history based on the evidence from the excavated areas within the two hectare site. Most of the Tell has not been excavated, because permission could not be obtained from all of the land's private owners.

It is commendable that the site was settled at other times in the 1300 years between the late Iron and the Umayyad eras, though this seems unlikely because only Umayyad and Iron Age pottery has been obtained from the surface surveys at the site. When he visited the site in 1933, the American scholar Nelson Glueck mentioned that it was being cultivated, which means that any pottery on or immediately below the surface would have been well mixed together and dragged all along the surface of the site — indicating that an occupation gap in the pottery from the survey surely represents an actual gap in the history of the site.

Why the site was abandoned at the end of the Iron Age is not yet known. There is no evidence of burning which might suggest earthquake damage, though the presence of many arrowheads could indicate that battles took place at the site. In most buildings, the upper stories collapsed into the lower stories and filled in the ground floor rooms. In some cases crushing and killing people who were caught in the town's final catastrophe.



Part of the casemate fortification wall at the north-west corner of Tell Jawa, looking north towards Amman

Reconstructing Ammonite urbanism

The excavated areas have revealed a series of structures that will increase scholars' understanding of construction techniques and urban layouts in the Iron Age; this period is quite well represented in Jordan, but rarely has an entire walled town such as this been available for excavation.

Along with learning more about building techniques and material culture in the Iron Age, Dr. Daviau and her colleagues also seek to determine the Tell Jawaite's political, economic and cultural relationships with the Ammonite capital and heartland of Rabbath-Ammon (modern Amman) and nearby Iron Age settlements at well-documented sites such as Tell Umeiri, Hisban and Sahab.

The most impressive feature of the ancient town is probably its outer fortification wall. It has been excavated at several points to reveal a casemate wall that is nearly six metres thick in some places. Typically, it comprised a two-metre-thick outer casemate wall made of large boulders nearly a metre long each, separated by a space of nearly two metres from an inner casemate wall. The inner and outer casemates were made up of rooms built against the main wall.

Towers were positioned along the wall in several places. One excavated tower along the west side of the wall measured nine by five metres, and now is separated from the wall itself by a gap of nearly a metre. This gap probably did not exist in antiquity, but does

today because the connection between the tower and the wall has disappeared over time. A cache of 25 iron arrowheads found next to the tower may well suggest its defensive purpose.

Along the southeastern edge of the site, Dr. Daviau's team found the basic casemate wall plus an additional buttress-like wall outside and downhill from it. She thought this may have been a logical point for a roadway to enter the city through a gate. The gate system appears to have been uncovered, but there is no roadway. Inside the gate area is a series of rooms with 1.3-metre-thick walls, next to a cobbled floor area — suggesting to Dr. Daviau that perhaps she has stumbled across a type of gate that is previously unknown from the Iron II period.

The casemate fortification wall is pierced otherwise only by some stone-built plastered water drains that led to cisterns, and a narrow opening along the north-west section of the wall — perhaps an emergency escape passage. In most areas where it has been excavated, the town wall had domestic and other structures built right up against it.

In the south-west corner of the town, adjacent to the inner face of the wall, is a courtyard that was used to recycle groundstone tools: 50-centimetre-long millstones that had broken into smaller pieces measuring around 30-40 centimetres were worked into hand grinders and other tools, of which some 120 were found in this area. In the north-west corner of the town is a series of domestic rooms

built right up against the wall. Here were found ovens, mortars, groundstone tools to prepare and process food, cooking pots, iron knives with wooden handles, bones of cooked animals, unfired clay loom weights, and a plastered area with small bins, probably to store food or other commodities. About 20 large pithoi (storage) jars have been found throughout the site.

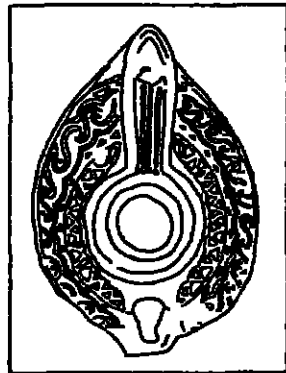
Two-storey houses prevalent

Most of the buildings inside the town were built almost entirely of stone, with only occasional evidence of mudbrick used on the upper sections of some interior walls. This could be due to the fact that many buildings were two stories high, with the ceilings of the lower stories comprising wooden beams and packed mud resting on rows of (usually three) stone pillars. In the only Umayyad period building excavated so far, large limestone slabs held in place by other heavy stones formed the ceiling, similar to the corbelling roofing technique that is so well preserved at Umm El Jimal in north-east Jordan.

"One of the things we do is study the different kinds of wall construction techniques, room sizes and building plans, and from this information we develop a better understanding of how Iron Age people lived and built their buildings," Dr. Daviau told the Jordan Times.

One large two-storey building with eleven rooms has two staircases still standing; this is thought to

have been the home of a wealthy person or an official, because it contained a variety of "high status" pottery such as red slipped and black burnished wares, and some unusual painted artifacts such as stoppers and vessels that look like cultic stands. On the ground floor of this building the excavators uncovered two tabuns (cooking ovens), a cooking area, a storeroom filled with craters, bowls, lamps, pithoi jars, unfired clay loom weights and many groundstone tools such as grinders, basalt pestles, mortars, mortar bowls with feet, pounders and other household implements.



An Umayyad period ceramic lamp from Tell Jawa (drawing by M. Beckmann)

The water system of the town is based totally on underground cisterns, due to the lack of a spring in the immediate area (the closest spring is four kilometres away). Some cisterns located outside the town walls were probably used to hold excess water when the cisterns within the walls were full.

One of the interesting issues that the team of

scholars working at Tell Jawa will try to clarify is its relationships with other Iron Age sites in the immediate vicinity, notably Tell Umeiri (located adjacent to the airport highway, about four kilometres to the west). It is assumed that both towns were part of the Ammonite kingdom, but this has yet to be firmly confirmed by the excavation evidence. One problem is that the political and cultural borders of ancient Ammon and Moab are not well delineated, and also changed over time. A strong piece of evidence for including Jawa in the Ammonite realm is a small figurine with an Osiris crown on its head, almost identical to the crowned Ammonite heads excavated in Amman.

Another problem is that comparisons are difficult because very few Ammonite urban sites (as opposed to the more plentiful towers) have been excavated and published, namely Umeiri, Sahab, Hisban, Amman citadel, and Safur (near Sweileh). The only evidence of ancient writing excavated at the site was a badly worn pottery sherd with a few barely legible letters in Ammonite script.

Umeiri continued to be inhabited in the late Iron II and Persian periods (circa 600-400 BC), when Jawa had been abandoned for some reason. The pottery evidence from both sites includes some parallels and overlaps, but the percentages of pottery forms differ: Jawa has more red slipped and black burnished wares, which suggests it is slightly earlier occupation date in the Iron II period, while Umeiri has more pottery from the ear-

Ramla, painted ceramic vessels, lamp fragments and a glass lamp base confirm that the latest use of the building was in the late Umayyad period (8th century AD). The building may have been abandoned after the earthquake of 747 AD, as no conclusive evidence for occupation after that date has been discovered.

The Umayyad town also used an extensive water and agro-industrial facility located about 300 metres to the south, in an area where the natural bedrock rises out of the earth. Ninety different installations have been identified at this site, including cisterns, caves, animal herding pens, a wine treading floor with associated settling basin, olive crushing systems, quarries and other facilities. Excavations of the cave and the treading floor turned up pottery that could be classified either as very late Byzantine or early Umayyad. The Umayyad use of the area is certain because a threshold in a door in a wall across the entrance of the cave is identical to a threshold inside the Umayyad building on the Tell. Given the peace and security that characterised the area at that time, it is not unusual to find such important economic resources located outside the town in an open area.

Uncertain future

If you would like to examine the remains of a walled Iron Age town close-up, you should plan to visit Tell Jawa soon. Despite its wealth of archaeological information from one of the most dynamic periods in Jordan's ancient history, Tell Jawa is unlikely to survive very much longer — because the private owners of the land adjacent to the Tell have started to build houses beside it, and a new road is being built through the western part of the Tell. This highlights the dilemma facing archaeological conservation throughout the country: How to preserve and study ancient sites while also assuring the rights of citizens to use their land as they wish? Whether or not it helps to resolve this question, Tell Jawa has already contributed significantly to our knowledge of human culture, architecture and urbanism in the Iron Age.

The Tell Jawa project has been funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Wilfrid Laurier University, and private donations. It started six years ago under the auspices of the Madaba Plains Project that centres around Tell Umeiri, but has been an independent research project for the last four years. The work is sponsored by Wilfrid Laurier University, an disc carried out in Jordan in cooperation with the Jordanian Department of Antiquities and with the logistical support of the American Centre of Oriental Research.

Evidence for the Umayyad settlement comes primarily from one excavated two-storey building near the centre of the tell, though other structures from this period certainly remain to be uncovered. Building techniques in the Umayyad building are very similar to those used at homes from the same period at Pella, in the north Jordan Valley. Outer walls were built of hewn, semi-hewn and unhewn stones in a "boulder-and-chink" style, with fill in between the boulders consisting of soil and small stones. Some walls included reused elements from earlier periods.

The central courtyard of the Umayyad building was paved with a plain mosaic floor, which may represent the earliest phase of construction, probably in the late 7th century AD. Artifacts such as copper coins minted in Damascus and

Croatian Army

(Continued from page 1)

rights of all Serb civilians would be protected and all former fighters except those "involved in war crimes" would be pardoned.

With the cross-over of the Bosnian army into Croatia, wars in the two countries were solidly merged and threatened to draw in the powerful military of Serb-led Yugoslavia for the biggest Balkan battle since World War II.

Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic has so far held back, insisting on negotiations in his newfound role as peacemaker. But pressure was sure to mount from nationalists in Serbia and the army to join the fight, as the army did in the 1991 Serb-Croat war.

That six-month battle, which followed Croatia's secession from the Yugoslav federation, killed an estimated 10,000 people, displaced hundreds of thousands and left one-third of Croatia in rebel hands. Croatia has since reorganised and equipped its army despite a U.N. arms embargo.

Meanwhile, Egypt's Foreign Minister Amr Musa on Saturday gave implicit backing to Croatia's military drive

against rebel Serbs, saying Serb attacks on Muslims in Bosnia left no room for international sympathy.

"Sooner or later, he who kills gets killed," said Mr. Musa. "The Serbs leave no scope to sympathise with them under any circumstances after their behaviour and criminal attacks on the Bosnian people."

Egyptian Television said the government was launching a nationwide campaign to raise cash and humanitarian assistance for Bosnian Muslims.

It said prime minister Atef Sedki had instructed the Egyptian Red Crescent Organisation to supervise collection of donations in Cairo, Alexandria and Rural provinces.

Germany's Chancellor Helmut Kohl said that an escalation of the conflict in former Yugoslavia was possible but could be avoided, after Croatian forces launched an offensive against rebel Krajina Serbs.

"There is no military solution to this conflict. We must find a solution through negotiations," he told daily newspaper Bild in an interview. "It almost looks hopeless, but we must take every possible chance to negotiate peace," he said.

King urges

(Continued from page 1)

details of plans for building a conference palace in Aqaba. Also Saturday, King Hussein, accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Hamzeh Ibn Al Hussein, made a tour of Aqaba and visited the headquarters of the Royal Navy and called at Aqaba municipality, where he met its mayor Riyad Al Helou and the municipal council members.

King Hussein voiced his full support and backing to the council's endeavours to develop services in the city and improve tourism sites.

Hizbollah

(Continued from page 1)

arm Hizbollah as a condition for a withdrawal from South Lebanon within the framework of a Middle East peace settlement.

The Lebanese government refuses to rein in the group before an Israeli withdrawal. But its relations are strained with Hizbollah, the only militia left over from the 1975-90 civil war that is still armed.

Rebel

Kurds kill

9 in Turkey attacks

ANKARA (R) — Rebel Kurds killed eight civilians, including two children under 10, and one soldier in separate attacks in southern Turkey near Syria, the semi-official Anatolian news agency said Saturday. The emergency rule governor's office in the southeastern city of Diyarbakir said troops had killed nine guerrillas of the rebel Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in separate clashes in the southeastern provinces of Bingol and Strnak. The figures cannot be independently confirmed. The eight civilians were killed and four more hurt in an overnight attack by the PKK in Hatay province, Anatolian said. Six of the dead were from the same family. "This is a massacre," said Hatay governor Utku Acun. In a separate incident in the same province on Saturday, PKK guerrillas killed one soldier and injured two others in an ambush on a military vehicle. Mr. Acun told Anatolian. More than 17,500 people have been killed in Turkey in the PKK's 11-year fight for independence or autonomy in the southeast.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Scandal-ruined BCCI founder dies

KARACHI (AP) — Agha Hasan Abedi, founder of the scandal-ruined Bank of Commerce and Credit International (BCCI), died Saturday in a Karachi hospital. He was 74. Doctors at the Aga Khan Hospital here said Mr. Abedi died of heart failure. He reportedly had not recovered consciousness since being admitted to hospital last Monday. Mr. Abedi's health had been failing since his heart transplant in 1988. Confined to a wheelchair, Ms. Abedi lived in virtual seclusion in his modest home in Karachi. Mr. Abedi's wife was at his side when he died, doctors said. He also is survived by one daughter, Maha. In one of the most spectacular banking fraud cases, international banking regulators shut down BCCI's world-wide operations on July 5, 1991. Mr. Abedi, however, had relinquished control of BCCI in 1988 following two massive brain attacks. He also suffered a stroke which resulted in brain damage and the loss of his voice. Labelled the world's most corrupt bank, the BCCI was linked to massive fraud and theft. It was connected to clandestine arms deals, financing of terrorists and laundering of drug money. Depositors lost millions of dollars as regulators seized BCCI's assets. Mr. Abedi, who dreamed of building a world banking empire to challenge the Western financial giants, steadfastly denied the charges. In 1994 he was convicted of fraud in absentia in the United Arab Emirates and sentenced to an eight-year prison term. Pakistan refused to extradite him. The U.S. also sought Abedi's extradition, but Pakistan refused.

UAE starts tagging of threatened sea mammal

ABU DHABI (AP) — The dugong, a shy, seagrass-eating ocean mammal facing extinction, came under close scrutiny Saturday as a two-week-long satellite tagging expedition began. The tagging got under way in the Butini shoals about 150 kilometres along the coast of the southern Gulf emirate of Abu Dhabi, capital of the United Arab

Emirates. Jonathan Ali Khan, director of the Arabian Seas Expedition in charge of the project, said the dugong was important because it helped maintain the balance of seagrasses. The tagging, which uses a small radio transmitter to send a signal to satellites in earth orbit, will help scientists figure out the dugong's roaming patterns. According to the conservationist, the dugong population in Arabian waters is believed estimated at about 7,300 and is the second largest in the world. Australia has the largest number estimated at some 30,000.

Workers march across Ankara

ANKARA (AFP) — Thousands of public sector workers began a march across downtown Ankara Saturday to press for higher wages and improved working conditions. The march, organised by the Turkish Workers Unions Confederation (Turk-Is) and authorised by the government, gathered workers from across the country who came in busloads. However, police kept a close watch on the demonstrators, frisking them as they entered closer to the city centre. Hundreds of policemen were deployed, and armoured personnel carriers were stationed at road junctions. Carrying banners proclaiming: "We want our rights now, not in the grave," as well as other slogans, the marchers walked along a bridge crossing downtown Ankara. They included workers from the health, construction, military and food sectors. "Last year, the workers got a 25 per cent raise after demonstrations and strikes," said Bayram Meral, head of Turk-Is. Turkish law allows workers to go on partial strike and to stage demonstrations — on condition they obtain permission from local authorities. Turk-Is was pushing for a higher pay raise than the 4.5 per cent the government offered this year, which Mr. Meral said was insufficient to meet the inflation rate. Turkish official figures put this year's rate at 80 per cent. The workers were also protesting the government's privatisation plan and delays in paying compensation to laid-off workers.

**Business
Daily
Beat**
A review
of economic news
from the Arabic press

**Committee
recommends
government
bear all
losses of
Rajal
Jordanian**

THE SPECIAL committee entrusted to study changing Royal Jordanian into a public shareholding company recommended that the government should bear all the losses of the airline, amounting to JD 150 million, with the possibility of covering the losses in installments depending on the financial condition of the government.

The committee also recommended, as another proposal, that the government take the necessary measures to reduce the airline's indebtedness to a debt/equity ratio of 2.33:1 or 30 per cent equity. Of the measures to be taken, the committee suggested capitalising some of the debts such as those of the Jordan Petroleum Refinery and the Social Security Corporation or settling the installments of the Airbus aircraft.

The committee's report pointed out that if the government opted for the debt reduction, the Royal Jordanian's capital should become JD 210 million, meaning that the government pays JD 290 million, of which JD 80 million would be the amount to cover the previous ownership rights. The report recommended that the government be charged with taking the necessary decisions to transform the airline into a public shareholding company whose shares would be fully owned by the government during a transitional stage. The shares would be sold later, once the airline's operations become positive and it is revaluated under new conditions.

According to the report, the government should continue having shares in order for the state to continue issuing important and strategic decisions. Also, the government should bear the cost or loss of any unprofitable route if it decides to keep it operating for non-commercial reasons.

The report suggested that the government should supervise and evaluate periodically the programme for change and the comprehensive structural development in addition to the performance and standards. The report said the government should take the necessary corrective decisions and should continue to grant the new company all the privileges, exemptions and facilities, currently given to the airline, for the next 10 years.

The recommendations included conducting a comprehensive and strategic review of the route network, restructuring the network and, consequently, the adequate aircraft fleet, forming production units to be managed as independent projects, selling as much as possible of auxiliary production units and implementing the system and programmes related to cash flows and financial returns.

The report, proposed utilising the services of experts to implement programmes related to the airline's performances, financial and administrative control, reorganisation of planning and programming, information technology priorities, marketing planning and field sales, studying the management and the human resources potential, reconsidering purchasing policies and procedures and reducing the number of employees (Al Dustour).

RECENT STATISTICS show that the number of unemployed lawyers stands at between 3,000 and 4,000 and that requires a reconsideration of the Jordanian universities which teach law (Al Dustour).

**India hints at salvaging
\$2.8 billion Enron deal**

BOMBAY (R) — India Friday held out the prospect of salvaging its largest foreign investment project as U.S. multinational Enron Corp. mullied its legal options after the announcement that its \$2.8 billion deal would be scrapped.

"When you get into a difficult situation, you find a way to get out of it. I'm sure something like that will happen," said Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao during a visit to Malaysia.

But Mr. Rao declined to say how the deal with India's western state of Maharashtra might be saved after the state government — run by a coalition opposed to Mr. Rao's nationally-ruling Congress Party — said it had scrapped it.

Vijay Kalantri, president of an industrial group called the All-India Association of Industries (AIAI), Friday urged Enron to renegotiate the deal and take part in competitive bidding for the contract.

Enron said Thursday it was ready discussions with the Maharashtra government — India's most industrialised state which has Bombay as its capital — but state leaders appeared in no mood to negotiate over the 2,015 megawatt project.

"The case from Enron's side is very weak," said

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Gopinath Munde who headed a committee that recommended scrapping it.

He told a news conference Friday that any claim for compensation for scrapping the contract would not stand up in court.

But Indian Power Minister N.K.P. Salve said in New Delhi that Maharashtra state's apparent reasons for cancelling the Enron deal were similar to arguments raised in courts which had already upheld the validity of the project's contracts.

Maharashtra scrapped the project because it said it was too expensive, the cost of power would be too high and there was no competitive tender.

Mr. Salve told parliament that the matter was essentially between the government of Maharashtra, its electricity board and the Dabhol Power Company formed by Enron and its U.S. partners General Electric and Bechtel.

But, he said, "the central government is directly concerned to the extent of its liabilities under the counter-guarantees given in favour of Dabhol Power Company and generally about the possible fallout of the decision of the Maharashtra government on the investment climate in India."

Enron Friday was focusing on its legal options, but said that so far it had received no official notice to stop work on the first phase of the project.

The index of the Amman Financial Market rose to 145.44 points, up 0.05 per cent from 154.37 on Wednesday.

The value of shares traded rose to 718,904 dinars from 704,978 dinars on Wednesday.

Trading was thin, with 530 contracts executed for 269,645 shares, with the market generally underpinned by demand on select industrial

blue-chips and some bank stock.

The market is also cash-short, with a spate of low priced new issues diverting funds from the official exchange to the primary market.

Dealers say lack of institutional buying in quiet summer trade was being worsened by investor uncertainty ahead of a full parliamentary debate on new economic laws the government wants passed before a regional economic summit next October in Amman.

In industrial, the leading

sector, two blue-chip drug firms saw some active trading: Dar Al Dawa Development and Investment shed 30 files to 7,900 dinars. Arab Pharmaceutical Manufacturing shed 70 files to 5,140 dinars.

Jordan Petroleum Refinery shed files to 10,450 dinars while Jordan Cement, more than 50 per cent state owned, shed 10 files to 3,800 dinars.

In banks, Arab Bank rose 250 files to 214,500 dinars. Amman Bank for Investments, focus of recent activity, rose 10 files to 1,090 dinars.

A total of 200,113 shares worth 127,899 dinars changed hands in the new issues primary market.

Trading volume at AFM stays thin

AMMAN (R) — Jordanian shares closed a touch higher at start of weekly trade Saturday in dull activity subdued by lack of institutional support, dealers said.

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**Euro
Disney
climbs out
of the red**

PARIS (R) — Euro Disney has announced its first profit since opening three years ago after packing its Theme Park near Paris with crowd-pullers like the space mountain thrill ride.

The company said net profit for the three months ended June 30 was 170 million francs (\$35.36 million), including an extraordinary gain of 84 million francs (\$17.47 million).

The company lost 546 million francs (\$113.6 million) in the year-earlier third quarter when fears that it might close down because of its financial woes reduced the number of visitors.

Euro Disney said the improvement reflected growth in revenue and operating margins as well as the debt-free holiday and other benefits from a financial restructuring last August.

"Given these results we have a chance of breaking even in 1995," a spokesman said.

Analysts said the results suggested a year-on-year rise in attendance of about 30 percent and deep cost cuts.

"It's further evidence that Euro Disney is a commercially viable concept — that there's nothing wrong with having put a Disney park in the Paris region," said David Klein at broker Natwest Selier.

He and many other analysts crossed out their previous loss estimates and now predict a profit of around 50 million francs (\$10.4 million) at Euro Disney for the 1994/95 year.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
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TELEPHONE: 427113 / 427119				
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 05/08/1995				
COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ARAB BANK PIG	260	55800	214.250	214.500
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	3064	13007	4.590	4.570
CATRO AMMAN BANK	760	3428	4.510	4.510
BANK OF JORDAN	300	1024	3.390	3.380
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	11700	1472	1.260	1.260
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	250	630	2.520	2.520
JORDAN CUP BANK	3900	4467	1.140	1.140
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	2776	10449	3.760	3.760
BUSINESS BANK	300	1155	3.850	3.850
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	777	3092	3.970	4.000
BETT CHALF GENTRA INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	4936	3480	3.480	3.480
ARAB BANK FOR INVESTMENT	73800	79987	1.080	1.090
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	760	1220	1.620	1.620
BANKS SECTOR	100135	195660	INDEX NUMBER: 126.05	CHANGE: -0.201
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	500	1355	2.720	2.710
INSURANCE SECTOR	500	1355	INDEX NUMBER: 126.84	CHANGE: -0.087
VEHICLES OWNERS FEDERATION	24723	58849	1.700	1.690
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	494	2722	5.400	5.510
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	2700	6007	2.240	2.230
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	680	815	1.200	1.200
JORDAN PEARL FOUNDATION / ALMA	1200	11880	9.900	9.900
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & CONSUMER HOTELS	32715	32715	2.220	2.240
ARAB TRAVEL FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	200	648	3.220	3.240
SARMA PRIVATE UNIVERSITY	3700	5180	1.400	1.400
SERVICES SECTOR	58476	110003	INDEX NUMBER: 128.57	CHANGE: +0.547
JORDAN TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	200	5420	28.500	27.100
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	24227	92200	3.810	3.800
JORDAN PHOSPHATE MINES	3468	10339	3.050	3.050
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	6181	64768	10.490	10.450
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	850	2805	3.330	3.300
THE JORDAN WOODSTOCK MILLS	350	4191	7.620	7.610
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	7668	39698	5.210	5.100
JORDAN CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	574	3355	5.850	5.850
THE JORDAN PAPER MANUFACTURING	680	1664	2.580	2.560
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & CONSUMER HOTELS	544	2056	3.800	3.850
NAPTA INDUSTRIES	2550	6142	2.530	2.380
DAR AL DAWA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	9750	72489	7.930	7.900
UNION INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	2128	2128	7.750	7.760
JORDAN ALUMINUM INDUSTRIES	7300	3028	5.340	5.320
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	7350	2643	4.80	4.80
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	1150	1622	1.430	1.430
UNION INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	2011	5429	2.650	2.720
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRIES	5536	5930	1.080	1.070
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	1280	2838	2.260	2.270
JORDAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	850	200	2.400	2.400
ALADDIN INDUSTRIES	1868	8339	4.350	4.530
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MATCH/STOCK	1260	763	620	610
ARTISTICAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	280	1193	4.270	4.270
JORDAN SULPHO-CHEMICALS	900	1318	1.520	1.650
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	980	2081	2.220	2.200
KAUFER INVESTMENT	942	942	1.550	1.570
UNIVERSAL SCIENCE INDUSTRIES	14254	4942	3.400	3.410
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	7400	15906	2.130	2.140
JORDAN NEW SABLE COMPANY	760	1300	1.740	1.730
UNION INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	14200	16622	1.430	1.430
UNION CHEMICAL & VEGETABLE OIL INDUSTRY	1650	3584	2.200	2.170
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	110534	401887	INDEX NUMBER: 130.87	CHANGE: -0.312
GRAND TOTAL	268445	718904	INDEX NUMBER: 154.44	CHANGE: -0.057
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET : 200113				
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET : 127899				

**Foreign-funded firms in China
maintain rapid import-export growth**

BEIJING (AFP) — Foreign-funded firms in China posted overseas trade volume of \$46.3 billion in the first half of 1995, a jump of 29.4 per cent over the same period last year.

Imports were up 23 per cent to \$27.36 billion, while exports surged 41 per cent to \$18.94 billion, the China Daily said Saturday, citing newly released customs statistics.

The export growth rate for foreign-funded companies was actually lower than the national average of 44 per cent.

Their import growth rate also slowed dramatically compared to the 44.5 per cent posted a year ago — a fact customs officials attributed to a sharp decline in the import of machinery as part of foreign investment.

The export of manufactured products by foreign-funded firms totalled \$17.8 billion in the January-June period — 43 per cent more

than a year ago — and accounted for 94 per cent of their entire export volume.

However, the officials admitted that the figures for the foreign-funded sector as a whole had a significant geographical imbalance.

Coastal regions all reported increases in the sector's foreign trade, while foreign-funded companies in nine of the country's 18 inland provinces saw their import-export volume slip.

Firms in the booming southern province of Guangdong led the country in terms of foreign trade volume, posting \$23.4 billion in the first half.

Hong Kong remained the largest market for export from foreign-funded firms, followed by the United States, Japan and the European Union.

Meanwhile, foreign banks in China posted net profits of \$79.75 million in the first six

months of the year — a leap of 120 per cent from the same period last year, the People's Bank of China (PBOC) said Saturday.

By the end of June, overseas banks operating in a 14 Chinese cities hoisted total assets of \$14.51 billion, according to the central bank's statistics.

Outstanding loans amounted to \$9.81 billion, of which 92.5 per cent were made to companies in China — most of them Sino-foreign joint ventures. Deposits grew to \$2.57 billion.

"It is remarkable for a bank to show a profit or balance its books in a new market within two years' time, but such is the case with most a senior PBOC official in charge of foreign bank affairs."

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Markets				
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U.S. Dollar in International Markets				
Currency	New York Close	New York Close	Date: 5/8/95	
sterling Pound	1.6060	1.6055	5/8/95	
Deutsche Mark	1.3905	1.3912		
Swiss Franc	1.1490	1.1525		
French Franc	6.7910	6.8080		
Japanese Yen	90.47	91.40		
European Currency Unit	1.3390	1.3328		

Precious Metals				
Date: 4/8/95				
Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz
Gold	383.65	1.50	Silver	5.17
				0.120

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin				
Date: 5/8/95				
Currency	Bid	Offer		
U.S. Dollar	0.701	0.705		
Sterling Pound	1.1245	1.1301		
Deutsche Mark	0.5012	0.5037		
Swiss Franc	0.6076	0.6106		
French Franc	0.1456	0.1463		
Japanese Yen	0.7662	0.7760		
Dutch Guilder	0.4474	0.4496		
Swedish Krona	---	---		
Italian Lira	0.0446	0.0448		
Belgian Franc	---	---		

Other Currencies		Date: 5/8/95	
Currency	Bid	Offer	
Bahraini Dinar	1,8410	1,8530	
Lebanese Lira ^a	0,04250	0,04325	
Israeli Sheqel	0,1865	0,1877	
Kuwaiti Dinar	2,9950	2,9550	
Qatari Riyal	0,1911	0,1923	
Egyptian Pound	0,1900	0,2160	
Omani Riyal	1,6090	1,6280	
UAE Dirham	0,1900	0,1909	
Greek Drachma ^a	0,0250	0,0250	
Cypriot Pound	1,5270	1,5960	

Graf admits 'mistake' in handling finances

BONN (AFP) — World number one Steffi Graf, formerly implicated in tax evasion charges, admitted Friday she had made a "mistake" in not taking a bigger role in her financial affairs.

Speaking in an exclusive interview on public German television station ARD, Graf, 26, also made it clear she was not retiring over her current problems.

Her father Peter, 57, who acts as her business manager, is still being held on tax evasion charges after being arrested on Wednesday.

Steffi Graf's personal wealth is estimated at 100 million marks (71 million dollars), but she regretted not keeping a closer watch on her money.

"I am going to tend to the consequences and take decisions in the next few days in order to totally assume my responsibility on these things," she said.

Graf admitted she was aware of suspicions by public prosecutors in mid-May, in a first meeting in her luxury home at Brühl near Heidelberg.

Several of Steffi Graf's properties were searched on May 23 at the request of prosecutors.

"It has been difficult for me to concentrate on the court these last few weeks. My tennis has not occupied all my thoughts," she added.

It was the first time Graf had spoken publicly since her father Peter was arrested.

He is being held in a prison hospital near Ludwigsburg and Judge Johannes Juelch said Friday it was not possible to predict how long Graf would be held. "Investigations have only just begun," he said.

He denied reports that Graf had suffered a heart attack. "He is depressed but otherwise in good health," he said.

Juelch added Peter Graf's lawyer had still not commenced any legal procedure against the commitment.

He confirmed investigations against Steffi Graf were closely linked to those against her father. But Juelch added there was no reason to charge the tennis star herself.

Steffi Graf also poured water on rumours she may quit tennis over the affair. "I never thought for a single moment about retirement. This thought never occurred to me," she said.

But friends previously said she was devastated by her father's arrest and was on the verge of giving up. "She is genuinely thinking of retiring. She has never been as close," one friend said.

"I think she now needs the support of a lot of people. Public opinion, the German tennis federation, and the media must comfort her so that she can overcome this situation," said Klaus Hofsaess, the German national coach.

According to the magazine Der Spiegel, a company called Sunpark Sports BV was created in 1987 in Holland by Peter Graf to both look after the millions of dollars earned promoting his daughter and to hide the money from German tax authorities.

Graf also has lucrative deals with car manufacturers, beauty products and a line of sports clothes bearing her name.



Steffi Graf

Bennett completes sweep of Evans

PASADENA (AFP) — Fifteen-year-old Brooke Bennett secured her place above Janet Evans as the new queen of U.S. women's distance swimming here Friday, taking her third title at the U.S. Swimming Championships.

Bennett won the 1,500-metre freestyle in 16 minutes, 17.84 seconds on the final day of the U.S. qualifier for next week's Pan Pacific Swim Championships in Atlanta at the 1996 Olympic Venue.

Bennett, who already beat Evans in the 400m and 800m finals, had the second-fastest 1,500m in the world this year.

"The first 1,000 felt really good. My stroke was smooth," Bennett said. "In the last 500 I got tired so I tried to hold my stroke and finish as hard as I could. In a race this long, if it starts to hurt, it's tough to keep going."

World-record holder

Evans, who was fifth in 16:27.99, decided after the defeat to skip next week's Pan-Pac and will instead have her inflamed tonsils removed and return to training August 30, two days after her 24th birthday.

"I thought I would be hurting at the end and I was," Evans said. "If anything, it was good training."

Barcelona Olympic Champion Summer Sanders, who came out of retirement only four months ago, made the PanPac team after having spent the past 18 months away from the water.

"I was going to be a commentator at the Pan Pacific, but to tell the truth, it's good to be a swimmer," Sanders said.

Sanders finished second in the 200 individual medley. Allison Wagner won the U.S. title in two minutes, 15.99 seconds with Sanders, the 1992 Olympic winner in the 200 butterfly, second in

2:16.33. "I was really surprised at the time," Sanders said. "I wanted to go 2:16 but I said, 'Summer, you can't do that.'"

Amy Van Dyken set the only U.S. women's record of the meet in the final women's event, winning the 50 freestyle in 25.13 seconds, shaving five-hundredths of a second off her mark set at the 1994 world championships.

"I didn't feel like an American record," Van Dyken said. "I was surprised at the time. I breathed once at 25 metres. Hopefully I'll swim faster next week. I'm hoping to break 25 seconds but you never know what will happen."

Chad Carvin, runner-up in the 1,500m freestyle, became the only U.S. man to qualify for the PanPac in three individual events. He won the 200 freestyle title and also qualified as the 400 freestyle runner-up.

Argentina, Brazil win in Youth World Cup

QUITO, Ecuador (AP) — Brazil and Argentina both won matches Friday in the second day of the Youth World Cup Soccer tournament.

Brazil defeated Germany 3-0, while Argentina logged the same score against Portugal, and both Latin American teams showed they would be among the favourites to win the championship for youths under 17 years old.

Brazil's win puts it on top of Group D on a difference of goals over Oman, which defeated Canada 2-1. Group D played in Ibarra, 75 kilometres north of Quito.

Argentina is the leader in Group B. It is followed by Costa Rica, which scored two goals late in its match against Guinea, to win Friday night's 2-0. Guinea and Portugal filled out the group, which plays in Cuenca, 310 kilometres south of the capital of Quito.

Group C play saw two ties. Nigeria and Qatar parted 1-1, while Spain and Australia battled to a 2-2 standoff in Riobamba, 160 kilometres south of Quito.

The tournament started Thursday with the Group A matches. Ecuador beat the United States 2-0 and Ghana defeated Japan 1-0.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Lynch banned after drugs test

MANCHESTER (R) — British track cycling champion Shawn Lynch was suspended for 12 months on Saturday after failing a dope test. Lynch, a South African with a British racing licence, provided a sample which exceeded the testosterone ratio during a track meeting at Leicester on June 4. "The ratio of testosterone to epitestosterone was analysed at 44 to 1 which exceeded the permitted limit of six to one," said Ian Emmerson, president of the British Cycling Federation. Lynch has the right of appeal.

Yankees purchase Strawberry's contract

DETROIT (AP) — The New York Yankees purchased the minor-league contract of outfielder Darryl Strawberry Friday from triple-A Columbus and designated outfielder Luis Polonia for assignment. In 31 minor-league games at three different levels, Strawberry hit .286 with eight home runs and 35 RBIs. Polonia hit .261 with 15 RBIs and 10 stolen bases in 67 games with the Yankees.

Robson fires Barmby ultimatum

MIDDLESBROUGH (AFP) — Middlesbrough boss Bryan Robson issued an ultimatum to Tottenham Hotspur on Saturday and said he will not be increased his bid for unsettled striker Nick Barmby. Robson dismissed reports on Friday that he had made a 5.25 million pound (about \$8.3 million) bid for the England star. Bt he admitted he was keen to take the player to the north east and told Spurs chairman Alan Sugar that he will not get involved in an auction for the player. The Boro boss also insisted Sugar was wrong to suggest that the offer for Barmby includes a series of clauses which will determine how the fee is paid. On Friday Sugar said: "We don't know what the fee is meant by money in Middlesbrough—in London it's the stuff you can put in the bank. The so-called increased deal is complicated, whereby Middlesbrough might pay more off the basis of a lot of it." But Robson, who has followed the progress of 21-year-old Barmby at youth, under-21, B and full levels with England responded on Saturday by insisting: "I won't become involved in auctions. I have a valuation of Barmby and it is up to Spurs whether they agree with it."

Celtic get green light

GLASGOW (AFP) — Celtic's pre-season friendly against Newcastle was given the go-ahead just a few hours before the match was due to kick off on Saturday afternoon. A last-minute hitch on Friday had threatened the fixture when council officials refused to grant a safety certificate for the new 26,000 stand at the Glasgow ground. But early Saturday morning, Celtic were granted the necessary paperwork for the 31,000 sell-out match to go ahead. Lifelong Celtic fan and pop star Rod Stewart is expected to mark the re-opening of Parkhead after the Bhoys spent last season at Hampden Park, home of the Scottish national team. A club spokeswoman said: "Everything is fine and the match is on. We have been given the safety certificate for the new stand."

Racer released from hospital

INDIANAPOLIS (AFP) — Indy-car driver Danny Sullivan, who crashed in a race last Sunday, was released from Methodist Hospital here Friday but is unlikely to return to the series this season. Sullivan, 45, had two steel plates inserted into his abdomen Tuesday during surgery to repair a broken pelvis and would have only a month to recover. "I'm going to be on crutches, a cane or a walker for about six weeks," the former Indy 500 champion said. "It doesn't look good for the season because there are only four races left." Juan Fangio II will drive Sullivan's car in Sunday's race at Lexington, Ohio.

Parma beats U.S. squad

EAST RUTHERFORD (AFP) — Tomas Brolin of Sweden scored the winning goal in the 74th minute and U.S. star Alexi Lalas headed a goal into his own net here Friday, giving Parma a 2-1 victory over the United States. The UEFA Cup champions from Italy advanced to the finals of the Parmalat Cup on Sunday against either Argentina's Boca Juniors and Portugal's Benfica. Brolin, who came on in the second half, kicked home an eight-metre rebound off U.S. goalkeeper Juergen Sommer for the winner. Parma held on despite playing a man short the final six minutes after Alberto DiChiara took a second yellow card for a rough tackle. The Lalas blunder came in the 35th minute and produced the only first-half scoring. As he tried to knock away a crossing pass from Gianfranco Zola to Filippo Inzaghi, Lalas lofted the ball past Sommer. Mike Lapper equalised for the U.S. team off a corner kick in the 62nd minute. Newly acquired European player of the year Hristo Stoichkov of Bulgaria watched the match from the bench while Faustino Asprilla did not accompany the team here.

Injured Werdel Witmeyer loses in quarterfinals

CARLSBAD (AP) — Slowed by a strained left quadriceps Friday, Marianne Werdel Witmeyer hardly resembled the player who upset second-ranked Arantxa Sanchez Vicario just a day earlier in the Toshiba Tennis Classic.

"It probably should be Webster's definition for disappointment and frustration," said Werdel Witmeyer, who fell 6-2, 6-2 to France's Sandrine Testud in a quarterfinal match. "It doesn't get any more frustrat-

ing than this." Werdel Witmeyer, seeded 11th and ranked 25th in the world, said she couldn't put any weight on her left leg. The injury affected her serve and also limited her ability to bend for low balls.

"I knew I had a very slim chance of winning when you can't really move around very well," said Werdel Witmeyer, who also has been slowed by a strained lower back.

Werdel Witmeyer's strong ground strokes and power

serves that were such a factor against Sanchez Vicario were absent Friday. Testud took full advantage, breaking Werdel Witmeyer's serve on all five break chances.

"She didn't serve but as good as she used to do it because of her leg," Testud said. "She couldn't serve strong. It was good for me."

Testud, ranked 62nd in the world, faces Lisa Raymond of Wayne, Pennsylvania. Raymond, ranked 22nd and seeded ninth, defeated 16th-seeded Gini Fernandez of Aspen, Colorado, 6-3, 4-6, 6-3 in the featured night match.

As expected, third-ranked Mary Pierce of France and

No. 4 Conchita Martinez of Spain easily advanced to a semifinal showdown Saturday.

Pierce, seeded third, beat Australia's Rachel McQuillan 6-2, 6-4, and Martinez, seeded second, routed Sweden's Asa Carlsson 6-0, 6-1.

Pierce, who lost just five games in her first two matches, looked as if she would roll right through McQuillan. But after winning the first set, Pierce ran into some difficulty in the second.

"I felt that Rachel played extremely well," Pierce said. "She hit a lot of good first serves, especially in the

second set she started feeling better."

But with the players on serve at 4-4 in the second, Pierce won her service game and closed out the match by breaking McQuillan's serve. "I felt that Rachel was starting to play better," Pierce said. "I didn't really want to let her have a chance to get into the match."

The easy victory was a departure for Martinez, who had struggled in winning her first two matches by the identical scores of 4-6, 6-2, 6-3.

"She made too many unforced errors," Martinez said. "But I felt much more comfortable with my game."

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♠ A 10
♥ Q J 8 6
♦ A K Q 2
♣ K 2

WEST
♠ 8 7 5 3
♥ 9 4 2
♦ 9 4 2
♣ 10 9 5
♠ 8 7 3

SOUTH
♠ K J
♥ 10 7 3
♦ 8 4
♣ A Q J 10 9 5

The bidding:
North East South West

2 NT Pass 6 NT Pass
Pass Dbl 7 ♠ Pass
Pass Dbl 7 ♠ Pass
Pass

Opening lead: Ten of ♠

The late Harry Fishbein was one of the most colorful characters on the bridge scene and not just because of the host of berets he possessed and wore all the time. He had a tremendous sense of humor and more often than not he was the goat in the tales he spun. This was one of his favorites.

Fishy came to the table of two young men whom he didn't recognize. He held hands and sat down before the young men were in six no trump.

On lead with the ace and king of hearts in his hand, Fishy decided he might as well make sure of a top score by doubling.

All would have been well had the auction ended there. However, the youngsters, destined to become two of the leading West Coast players, knew their opponents by reputation and South decided Fishbein would not have doubled without two sure tricks. South, therefore, corrected to seven clubs, on the theory that West had a 3-to-1 chance of leading the wrong suit. Fishy doubled again, more out of spite than any conviction he was going to defeat the contract.

Declarer's analysis was right on target—West led a diamond. Even so, declarer had only 12 tricks. However, declarer simply cashed the three top spades and six winners in clubs, coming down to A K 2 of diamonds in dummy and the 10 7 of hearts and one diamond in hand.

East was a dead duck. Forced to hold three diamonds to prevent the two of diamonds from becoming the fulfilling trick, Fishy let go of the ace and king of hearts in the hope that West held the ten. Unfortunately, declarer had that card and it was now high. Seven clubs doubled and made.

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Sports

World Athletics Championships Mitchell's injury hurts U.S. relay chances

GOTHENBURG (Agencies) — A leg muscle injury that knocked Olympic bronze medalist Dennis Mitchell out of the World Championships 100 metres on Saturday could also end U.S. dominance of the 4x100 metres relay.

Mitchell, who crashed out of the first round of the 100 with a cramp in his left leg, had been scheduled to anchor the sprint relay for the United States, who have won all four world titles in the event.

The 29-year-old American said it was unlikely he would compete.

"I want to give the United States the best opportunity," Mitchell said. "And the way I am feeling, I think me running on the relay is not possible."

Without Mitchell, who helped U.S. 4x100 metre relay teams get world records in 1992 and 1993, American 100 champion Mike Marsh said the Americans were so inexperienced that after 200 metre runner Jeff Williams "Probably our next best sprinter is Gwen Torrence."

Torrence is the Olympic women's 200 metre champion.

The Americans will also be denied the talents of Carl Lewis, a relay alternate, who pulled out of the championships on Thursday because of a hamstring injury.

Spokesman Mike Takaha said the U.S. coaches wanted to wait a day to see if there was a chance Mitchell might still be able to run the relay next weekend.

Takaha said if Mitchell was unable to run, Tony McCall, a college student with no international experience, would be called up to replace him.

Mitchell's absence would ensure Canada, who have the year's two fastest sprinters in Donovan Bailey and Bruny Surin, would be favourites for the relay gold medal.

Even before Mitchell's injury, the Canadians were looking like strong challengers to the U.S. team, who also include Maurice Greene, Jon Drummond and Marsh.

Mitchell said he hoped to return to the European circuit before the season ends "and kick some butt."

"One of those lanes (in the World Championships 100 metres final) belongs to me, and I'm going to get it back," Mitchell said.

Although he had suffered cramps about five days ago while training, Mitchell said he had felt fine on Saturday.

"I felt excellent warming up," he said, "and I have been having world record workouts."

"But when you are running workouts at that level, you are on a very thin line. You could blow up or you could keep everything together. I didn't blow up but somebody lit the wick. I was on the verge of blowing up."

"You have to be willing to take those kind of chances. I took it, and it worked against me this time. But it's not going to stop me from fighting and it's not going to stop me from coming back."

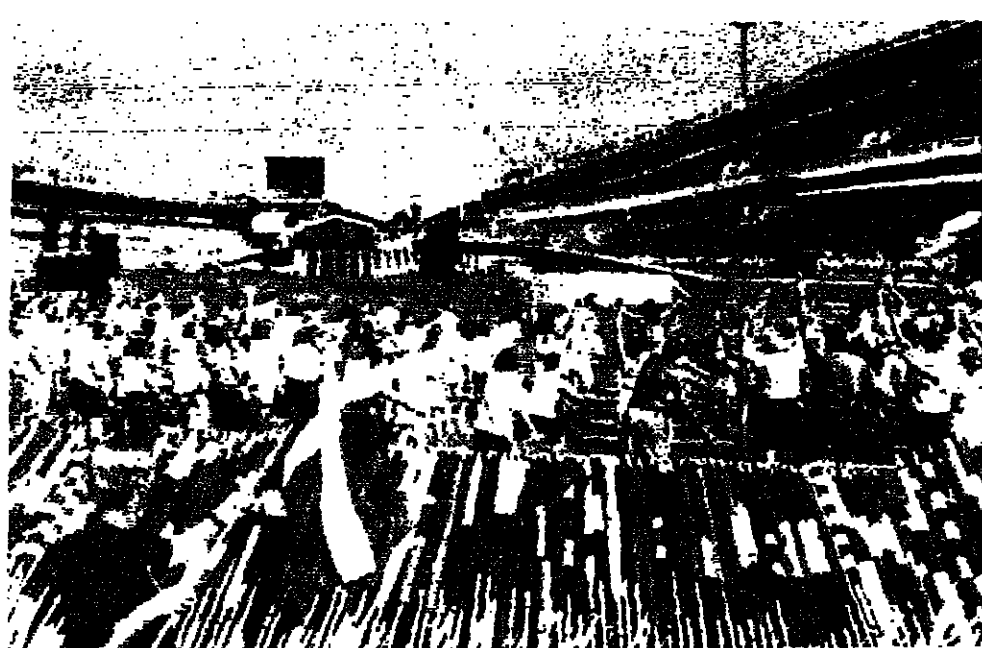
So far, only two of her 10 medals have been gold. Carl Lewis, also has 10 medals.

Even at 35, few doubt Ottey could add another gold, although she prefers to consider herself an underdog.

In the 200 she is truly the defending champion. But both Gwen Torrence and Russia's Irina Privalova have outperformed her this year.

"Strange, it is the first time in many years that I am not a favourite," she said. "There are two targets to aim for."

Devers is not one of them. After doubling in Stuttgart, she only aims for the 100 metres hurdles this time. In the controversial race, Devers was given a time of 10.81 seconds, edging Ottey by .01 seconds.



A young man takes out the Swedish flag from a row of national flags as participants rehearse for the opening ceremony of the 5th IAAF World Championships in Gothenburg, Sweden (AFP photo)

Ottey convinced she is 100m champ

Two years have not shaken Merlene Ottey's conviction that she is the world champion at 100 metres. However, the books show it is Gail Devers.

After one of the closest finishes in athletics history, judges needed specialised photo finish equipment before giving Devers gold over Ottey at the 1993 World Championships in Stuttgart, leaving the Jamaican heartbroken.

"I still believe I'm the champion. I still believe I won," she said. "Since they did not give me the gold last time, I want it now."

Any medal this year could make her the most decorated athlete at the World Championships.

So far, only two of her 10 medals have been gold. Carl Lewis, also has 10 medals.

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The race was so close that it took several minutes before the result was announced. The Jamaicans immediately filed a protest and as far as Ottey is concerned it still stands. The medals had to be presented a day late and gold went to the American.

Otherwise Ottey has melowered considerably.

"I have been running for 21 years now. It's been a lot of stress. I want to enjoy the last few years," said Ottey, who lives in Rome.

She said she will go for another year, through the Atlanta Olympics.

NBA accuses 14 players of wrongful interference in labour negotiations

NEW YORK (AP) — The NBA, which last month locked out its players, filed an unfair labour practice complaint Friday against 14 player agents, charging they improperly interfered in labour negotiations.

The complaint filed with the National Labour Relations Board named members of the agents' advisory council of the player's association. The council, made up of the game's most powerful agents, began the effort to dissolve the union, a process that helped derail a tentative labour agreement in June.

Also named are Michael Jordan, Patrick Ewing and 14 other players who have been the most vocal advocates of decertification and vocal critics of the rejected agreement.

The NLRB has already been brought into basketball's labour mess by the dissident players to oversee the decertification election.

The NBA said the agent group is improperly attempting to seize control of the union's negotiations with the league.

"The conduct of the agent group violates the most fundamental principles of federal labour law," NBA deputy commissioner Russ Granik said in a statement. "The agents cannot be allowed for their own economic self interest, to destroy a collective bargaining process that, until now, has enabled the NBA and its players to work constructively together for the past 30 years."

Among the agents named in the complaint filed with the NLRB is David Falk, agent for Jordan and Ewing and arguably the game's most influential agent. Falk said the complaint wrongly implies the players are too unintelligent to make their own decisions.

"I don't understand why the league continues to deprecate its players this way," he said. "Secondly I think it's beneath the character of David Stern and Russ Granik to make baseless accusations against people. I am surprised and disappointed the league would resort to low-level name calling."

Also named in the complaint is lawyer Jeffrey Kessler, who is representing Jordan, Ewing and the 14 others in a federal antitrust suit against the league that challenges the salary cap and college draft.

"It's a silly charge," Kessler said. "There's no basis for it. It's a desperate act and it's almost beneath the dignity of the league to file something like this."

Kessler said the agents group is not a labour organisation and thereby not subject to unfair labour practice charges.

The complaint alleged the agents defrauded players into signing forms saying they no longer wished to be represented by the union and submitted forged signatures to the NLRB as part of a petition seeking decertification.

The agents also were accused of "threatening, intimidating and undermining representatives of the NBPA."

"It's childish and petulant," Kessler said of the charges.

Since late June, the fight over decertification has divided NBA players and the leadership of the National Basketball Players Association has come under fire for the way it has conducted labour talks. Until this week, the union had waged a campaign against the agents and players pushing for decertification, saying it wanted to make a deal with the league.

On Wednesday, however, union executive director Simon Gourdine set a deadline of midnight Tuesday for reaching an agreement.

After that, the union will agree to relinquish its authority to represent the players, in effect joining the decertification movement.

Negotiations broke off Thursday with no progress made towards an agreement.

The league has opposed decertification, and commissioner David Stern said Thursday if the union dissolves, the lockout would continue indefinitely.

On Friday, the NLRB set Aug. 30 and Sept. 7 as dates for the players' union decertification election. At various NLRB offices around the country, players will vote on whether the union should continue to represent them.

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"It's childish and petulant," Kessler said of the charges.

who is representing Jordan, Ewing and the 14 others in a federal antitrust suit against the league that challenges the salary cap and college draft.

"It's a silly charge," Kessler said. "There's no basis for it. It's a desperate act and it's almost beneath the dignity of the league to file something like this."

Kessler said the agents group is not a labour organisation and thereby not subject to unfair labour practice charges.

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Since late June, the fight over decertification has divided NBA players and the leadership of the National Basketball Players Association has come under fire for the way it has conducted labour talks. Until this week, the union had waged a campaign against the agents and players pushing for decertification, saying it wanted to make a deal with the league.

On Wednesday, however, union executive director Simon Gourdine set a deadline of midnight Tuesday for reaching an agreement.

After that, the union will agree to relinquish its authority to represent the players, in effect joining the decertification movement.

Negotiations broke off Thursday with no progress made towards an agreement.

The league has opposed decertification, and commissioner David Stern said Thursday if the union dissolves, the lockout would continue indefinitely.

On Friday, the NLRB set Aug. 30 and Sept. 7 as dates for the players' union decertification election. At various NLRB offices around the country, players will vote on whether the union should continue to represent them.

Wimbledon ticket prices go up

WIMBLEDON (AP) — Tickets for next year's Wimbledon will cost more, the All England Club has announced.

The price for the most sought after ticket — Sunday's men's final on Centre Court — will increase from 50 pounds (\$80) to 52 pounds (\$83.20).

Tickets for Saturday's women's final and Friday's semifinal remain unchanged at 47 pounds (\$75.20).

In general, tickets for matches on Centre Court and Court 1 are up by 1 pound (\$1.60) with tickets for some dates on those courts remaining unchanged.

PSG defeat French champions

PARIS (AFP) — Paris Saint Germain staked an early-season claim to the French championship on Friday as they won 2-1 at Nantes.

Nantes only lost once in last year's title charge, but have already notched up their first loss in just three outings so far this season.

Super sub Pascal Nouma, who neither started nor finished the match, hit the winner for PSG with just seven minutes to go.

Earlier, Japhet N'Doram had opened the scoring for Nantes, only for Brazilian Rai to level the scores.

Nouma went on for Panamanian Dely Valdes in the 74th minute, and under relentless rain, shot home from a centre-front-Laurent Fourrier. But he had to leave the field in the 86th minute after his second yellow card.

However Nouma's goal brought PSG their first win of the season and their first at Nantes since November 8 1989. It also pushed PSG from 13th to fourth spot in the table.

A delighted PSG coach Luis Fernandez said afterwards: "It began like last year with Nantes scoring every time, but this time we showed character to come back into the match."

Youri Djorkaeff, PSG's close season signing from Monaco, said: "We were very certain of ourselves tonight. We were keyed up, but not nervous and always believed we could win."

However Nantes, despite the absence of striker Patrice Loko, in a psychiatric clinic after a rampage across Paris last month, dominated the match.

In the second minute, Nantes sliced through the Paris defence and Wally Dieng was forced to make a strong tackle on Jocelyn Gourvennec, who had to leave the field on a stretcher.

Nantes did not take long to make their breakthrough.

In the seventh minute, Benoit Cauet fed Reynald Pedros, who flighted an accurate cross from the left to N'Doram at the far post.

N'Doram, without hesitating, rifled a first-time volley into the top right hand corner to give PSG keeper and current French player of the year Bernard Lama no chance.

Despite pressure from Nantes' N'Doram, Claude Makelele, and Pedros, it was PSG who scored next. In the 23rd minute, Rai, world champion with Brazil last year, was on target with a trademark diving header from six yards to equalise at 1-1.

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Iraq hands U.N. data on germ warfare research Baghdad to 'do everything' to end sanctions

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraq has given the United Nations a written declaration on its past biological weapons programme and stated determination to do everything to get U.N. sanctions lifted.

The Iraqi side handed over a written declaration on its biological programme, Rolf Ekeus, chairman of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) charged with dismantling Iraq under the 1991 Gulf war ceasefire, told reporters on Saturday.

He said the declaration included the history of Iraq's biological research programme and a technical description of what had been achieved.

The Iraqis, he said, also provided documents in support of their claim that they had destroyed the biological weapons they had produced along with related research equipment.

That is of course a matter which has to be verified," he added. Furthermore, meetings were planned with senior Iraqi officials on Saturday, Mr. Ekeus said.

Asked how he described Iraq's declaration, Mr. Ekeus said Saturday: "Well, it is a history of the programme and it is a technical description of what has been achieved and there is some documentation added to the declaration supporting some of the statements they made in the declaration."

He said Iraq insisted it had

destroyed its germ warfare programme, "a matter which has to be verified."

"The Iraqi side explained that what they have produced (in biological weapons) has been destroyed. That is a statement. Of course, it is a matter which has to be verified," Mr. Ekeus added.

The government newspaper Al Jumhuriya said in a front-page editorial Iraq was determined to do everything possible to end the U.N. embargo imposed for its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

"We confirm to everyone that Iraq has made up its mind to put an end to sanctions as quickly as possible, using various means and methods," the paper declared.

The declaration is the first written document handed to the U.N. on biological weapons since Iraq admitted last month that its research in this area was geared for offensive purposes.

The biological file is the last remaining issue between Iraq and UNSCOM, which has said it would not recommend a lifting of a U.N. ban on Iraqi oil exports unless it was satisfied with Iraqi disclosures and verifications of past activities.

Iraq has warned that it will halt cooperation with Mr. Ekeus if he does not end his mission by the end of August. The envoy said closing the biological file would depend on the quality of Iraqi de-

clarations and how quickly his experts carry out verification.

The government newspaper also slammed U.S. President Bill Clinton for saying the United States would not lift the sanctions until Baghdad fully adhered to all post-Gulf war resolutions. It seemed Iraq's conflict was not with the U.N. Security Council but with Washington, the newspaper said.

Praising Mr. Ekeus for saying the lifting of sanctions was the responsibility of the council, Jumhuriya said: "It (Iraq) is serious in its readiness to cooperate with various parties and respect their vital interests provided they are legitimate."

Commenting on Mr. Clinton's remarks, Mr. Ekeus said after arriving in Baghdad on Friday that all members of the council should decide on the sanctions, not only the United States.

In Washington on Thursday, Madeleine Albright, the U.S. ambassador to the U.N., said Iraq could not be trusted to volunteer full data on its biological warfare stocks. She said Baghdad had admitted to producing enough agents to kill every man, woman and child on Earth.

She said Iraq's biological warfare programme was begun earlier than it had admitted and involved more biological agents and more facilities and people than had been revealed.



KING RECEIVES TOKEN GIFT: His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday receives a token gift from the Aqaba mayor and members of the city's Municipal Council (Petra photo)

U.S., Vietnam pledge new era of peace despite bitterness of the past

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) — Acknowledging the bitter past but pledging to open a new era of peace, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Manh Cam signed letters of diplomatic recognition Saturday.

"We have concluded the time has come to renew our ties and move forward into a new era," Mr. Christopher said after raising a glass of champagne to Mr. Cam.

But Mr. Christopher also gave a look backward, saying that establishment of relations had been made possible only because of the efforts of both sides to account for Americans still missing from the war.

"On behalf of all Americans, I express my gratitude to the many who helped in this important and noble endeavour," he said.

Mr. Cam stressed that the new relationship must be one of "mutual respect, equality and mutual cooperation," reflecting Vietnamese fears that friction may develop in the future over Vietnam's determination to keep its socialist system.

"I do hope relations will develop in a positive way in keeping with our expectations today," Mr. Cam said as the two men faced reporters from behind a green baize-covered table in the Oratoire, French-era state guesthouse.

Mr. Christopher is the first

U.S. Secretary of State to visit Vietnam since the war years of the 1960s and '70s and the first ever to go to Hanoi.

His visit opened with an airport ceremony at which he watched U.S. military personnel receive four wooden boxes containing human remains, possibly of Americans missing from the war.

The boxes were placed in aluminium containers that were then draped with American flags and loaded onto air force C-141 jets for a flight to an identification laboratory in Hawaii.

In a brief statement at Hanoi's Noi Bai airport, Mr. Christopher alluded to the dual themes of his trip, saying, "I am here to lay the basis for a better future, even as we continue to account for the past."

He expressed thanks for Vietnamese cooperation in locating remains of missing U.S. servicemen and said the fullest possible accounting "will remain the number one priority on our agenda with the government of Vietnam."

During his two-day visit Mr. Christopher was meeting with senior officials of the communist government and with U.S. business leaders eager to do business in Vietnam. He also was to officiate at the opening Sunday of the new U.S. embassy in the Vietnamese capital.

Mr. Christopher said he has appointed Desaix Anderson of the State Department

to be the first charge d'affaires in Hanoi pending nomination of an ambassador.

"Closer engagement is an America's interest, first and foremost to achieve the fullest possible accounting, but also because Vietnam is a vibrant country in a region of great importance to the United States," Mr. Christopher said in his arrival remarks.

"We can build a bridge of cooperation between America and Vietnam."

His arrival was an extraordinary moment in the troubled history between the two countries.

Immediately after World War II, the United States sought to help France maintain control of its southeast Asian colony. After the French were defeated and the country was divided between the Communist north and non-Communist south, the United States began a 10-year effort to save the south from being overrun by the north.

The effort cost some 58,000 American lives and killed untold numbers of Vietnamese.

But U.S. firepower and an intensive bombing campaign against the north were not enough. In April 1975, the last Americans were evacuated from Saigon and shortly after the North Vietnamese unified the country.

Mr. Christopher's military

adviser, Lt. Gen. Daniel Christman, recalled his service in Vietnam from July 1969 to July 1970 as a 101st Airborne Division company commander.

He said that like many others at the time, he counted the days and left with "a sense of relief."

This marks Mr. Christman's first return to Vietnam. He said he agreed with the decision to establish relations with the former enemy, but he conceded that "doesn't mean we don't go back with a great deal of memory and some pain."

Before going to Vietnam, Mr. Christopher spent a day in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, to get a firsthand look at a country that suffered horribly on the margins of the Vietnam War.

After the United States left Saigon in 1975 and the north Vietnamese unified the country, Cambodia was taken over by the Khmer Rouge guerrillas, a radical Communist group blamed for the deaths of more than 1 million Cambodians between 1975 and 1979.

Mr. Christopher also met with government officials and promised to press for congressional approval of most-favoured-nation trade status for Cambodia as well as to maintain the current level of foreign aid to the Southeast Asian country. Cambodia is receiving \$40 million in the current fiscal year.

Mr. Christopher's military

Bashir says: Egypt wants to control Sudan

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt has tried to control neighbouring Sudan ever since the Islamic leadership in Khartoum came to power in a 1989 coup, Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir charged in an interview published on Saturday.

He told the London-based Saudi newspaper Ash-Sharq Al-Awsat that Egyptian officials "cannot come to terms with the fact that Sudan has an independent leadership and they want a role in all its policies."

The Egyptian government "wants a regime at its disposal that it can guide as it wants," the president said. It wanted to name a political adviser in Khartoum when the Islamic leadership took power in 1989, he added.

Mr. Bashir also criticised the Arab League for its failure to mediate between the two countries over the disputed border region of Halaib, following Egypt's accusations Sudan was behind an attempt on President Hosni Mubarak's life.

"If the Arab League does not budge when conflict between two countries leads to armed incidents, when will it?" he asked.

Khartoum, which denies any role in the abortive assassination attempt on Mr. Mubarak in Addis Ababa on June 26, says a soldier and two of its policemen were killed in clashes with Egyptian troops in Halaib within a week of the attempt.

The president said that Washington's decision in 1993 to add Sudan to a list of countries allegedly supporting international terrorism was based on "reports from the Egyptian intelligence services."

Sudan was prepared to accept "visits to regions where the so-called terrorist training camps are located," he said.

Mr. Bashir also said that relations with the Gulf Arab monarchies, strained by Khartoum's support for Baghdad in the 1990-1991 crisis after Iraq invaded Kuwait, had improved.

Paris blast probe focuses on Algerian militants

PARIS (AFP) — Nearly two weeks after a bomb killed seven people on a packed Paris subway train in France's most deadly terrorist attack in a decade, new evidence points towards Algerian-linked fundamentalists.

No credible claims have been made for the attack, but the so-called Islamic connection now all but dominates inquiries into who planted the bomb which ripped apart an evening rush-hour train at Saint Michel Station on July 25, killing seven and injuring more than 80.

In particular, detectives are looking into a Belgian connection in the attack after discovering that the camping gas canister used fitted Belgian specifications, rather than French ones.

The information increasingly tends to confirm detectives' worst fears: that the blast is the work of Armed Islamic Group (GIA), the most hardline group struggling against the government in France's former North African colony.

French anti-terrorist detectives have officially refused to rule out any theory for the blast, which for several days threw Paris into a state of tension reminiscent of the mid-1980s when a 10-month wave of Iranian-linked attacks left 13 people dead and more than 300 injured.

Initial speculation as to the perpetrators was shared equally between Muslim

fundamentalists and Serbs angry at French President Jacques Chirac's hardline stance in Bosnia.

But evidence pointing towards Algeria has been building.

The first indications were eyewitness accounts from passengers on or near the targeted train. One passenger reported a "North African looking" man running away from the train at Chatelet, the stop before Saint Michel, minutes before the blast. He allegedly made an obscene gesture.

Another said he saw two Arab men sitting in the carriage in which the blast occurred. As they got off at Chatelet one of them told his friend, "there will be a party at Saint Michel tonight."

Then the type of bomb pointed in the same direction: Scientists pieced together a 3-kilo camping gas canister into which explosives had been packed. The GIA is specifically known to have used such bombs in its violence campaigns in Algeria in the past.

At the end of last week the nearest investigation has come to a credible claim for the blast emerged in an underground Islamic fundamentalist newsletter, El Ansar, in Stockholm.

The leaflet, which has made claims of GIA attacks in the past, did not specifically say it was their work this time

Palestinian group identifies Tel Aviv suicide bomber

SIDON, Lebanon (AP) — A Muslim fundamentalist Palestinian group who claimed he blew up an Israeli bus last month in a suicide attack said in a farewell statement released Saturday that victory against Israel could only be achieved through holy war.

Hezbollah-Palestine, a small fundamentalist splinter group, claimed responsibility earlier this week for the July 24 bombing near Tel Aviv in which six Israelis were killed.

It identified the suicide bomber as Jamal Fayez Yousef.

In Saturday's statement, faxed to media offices in this southern provincial capital, the group released what it said was Mr. Yousef's farewell address.

Mr. Yousef said the bombing was his "legitimate duty" and called for Palestinian unity to counter the Israelis.

"Unity is power and division is defeat," he said. "Do not give up on Jihad because it is the key to conquest," he told fellow Palestinians.

Mr. Yousef said he was a 30-year-old Palestinian, married with three children and carrying a Jordanian passport. He lived with his family in the Palestinian refugee camp in the northern Jordanian city of Irbid.

(In response to a question about an Israeli newspaper report that the perpetrator of the attack came from Jordan, the government last week said it was not contacted by the Israeli government over the case.)

Earlier, claims circulated in Israel suggested Hamas had carried out the attack. But these claims could not be immediately authenticated. Hamas had been held responsible for previous similar operations.

Sheikh Ahmad Mohanna, a Sunni Muslim cleric who heads Hezbollah-Palestine, criticised Hamas for claiming responsibility.

"We do not accept that the blood of any martyr to be falsified and others take credit for our struggle," he said in an interview with the London-based, Arabic-language daily Al Hayat.

Hezbollah-Palestine is believed to have some 50 mostly Sunni Palestinian followers in Lebanon. It is not linked to Hezbollah, or Party of God, the Iran-backed Lebanese Shiite Muslim group which has been leading a guerrilla war against Israeli occupation forces in South Lebanon.

U.S. hosts Partnership for Peace exercises

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Soldiers from 14 former east bloc countries, Canada and Britain will begin arriving Sunday at a Louisiana military training centre for the first NATO-Partnership for Peace exercise on U.S. soil. Dubbed the Cooperation Nugget 95, the month-long exercise is designed to strengthen cooperation between forces in peacekeeping and humanitarian relief tactics, organisers said in a statement. Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Hungary, Slovenia and Poland were to send troops as were the Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. Ukraine and the central Asian republics of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan are also participating in the exercise to be held at the Joint Readiness Training Centre at Fort Polk, Louisiana. The Partnership for Peace programme was adopted by NATO to strengthen cooperation between the western security alliance and countries of the former east bloc.

32 fishermen feared drowned in Bangladesh

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — At least 32 fishermen were feared drowned when four boats capsized in a storm in the Bay of Bengal, an official said Saturday. The fishing boats with 40 people on board were caught in rough weather off Barisal Coast on Thursday. Shafigul Islam, a local Red Crescent official said. Eight people were rescued by local villagers. Mr. Islam said. Rescue boats searched for the missing fishermen throughout Friday but without success. Mr. Islam said. Last month, 2 fishing boats were overturned by storm in the bay, killing at least 147 people.

9 Bangladeshi workers die in stampede

DHAKA (R) — A fire in a Bangladesh garment factory caused a stampede in which nine workers were trampled to death on Saturday, police said. Hundreds of workers fled down a narrow staircase when the fire alarm sounded in a nine-storey Dhaka building housing the workshops of two firms. FAA garments and Lusakha Garments. Nearly 100 people were hurt in the crush. The nine dead include four women, the fire itself damaged factory equipment, garments and cloth.

Police brace for punk invasion of Hanover

HANOVER, Germany (R) — German police thronged the streets of Hanover on Saturday to prevent an invasion by punks after an annual gathering of the scruffy youths turned into street battles overnight. Ninety-four police were injured in the clashes with up to 900 punks who had come from all over Germany for the festival, which has become known as "Days of Chaos." Punks wielding iron

bars built barricades with cars and set them alight, they hurled rocks and bottles at riot police, smashed shop windows and looted a supermarket. Police said two water cannons to disperse the crowds and firefighters were called in to put out the blaze. Police said they expected as many as 2,500 youths to arrive in Hanover on Saturday, although local authorities had banned punks from entering the city and placed units of border guards on trains to prevent punks from getting off in Hanover. "Anyone who looks obviously like a punk, will not be allowed to enter the city of Hanover," said police spokesman Horst Kastens. Police units from outside Hanover were brought in to patrol the city. The punks called a news conference late on Friday after the clashes and said they had been provoked by an excessive police presence at an event which had never previously flared into violence on such a scale. "We built the barricades to protect ourselves from the police, the police provoked us," said one punk from Hanover, who did not give his name. "The way they were kitted out, they were ready for deaths," he said. Police declined to say how many police were deployed, but witnesses said there were thousands of officers at the scene.

Iran turns guards into rapid deployment force

NICOSIA (R) — Iran said on Saturday it was turning its Revolutionary Guards, estimated at about 170,000, into a rapid deployment force. The official IRNA news agency quoted Major-General Mohsen Rezaei, commander-in-chief of the revolutionary guards, as saying: "Personnel are turning into rapid deployment forces." In what appeared to be an attempt to allay the fears, especially among Iran's Gulf Arab states, he described Tehran's relations with neighbouring countries as "good and friendly."

Iran hails Croatian attacks on Serbs

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran on Saturday hailed the Croatian army's offensive against Krajina Serb positions, hoping it would pave the way for a major alliance between Croatia and Bosnia against rebel Serbs in both countries. "It seems that Croatia and Bosnia now find themselves in a new situation and they could join the Serb aggressors," state-run radio said. It implicitly criticised Western countries as well as Russia for adopting a hasty position against the Croat military onslaught against the Krajina Serbs in Croatia. The attack had only come after "negotiations in Geneva failed" and in the wake of "U.N. inability to end the conflict" in the Balkans, the radio said. The Croatian army captured the rebel Serb capital of Knin, less than 48 hours after launching a massive offensive to end the secessionists' four-year-old independence drive, the Croatian defence ministry announced.

Major entangled in condom campaign row

LONDON (R) — A controversial British condom campaign has been furiously attacked by Roman Catholics in a row which has entangled Prime Minister John Major. The prime minister is one of the listed supporters of the British Safety Council's safe sex campaign, which has featured a picture of the Pope on its promotional leaflets with the slogan: "Eleventh commandment — thou shalt always wear a condom."

The Catholic weekly Universe newspaper has branded the campaign deeply offensive. In an open letter to Mr. Major in its latest edition, the Universe demanded that he "explain to the Catholic community why you feel it right to associate yourself with the mockery of a much-loved and well-respected religious leader." A Downing Street spokesman said Friday: "If there is a letter, we will be responding to it." "We have achieved what we set out to do — not to upset Catholics but to stimulate debate," said Fiona Harcombe, one of the campaign's organisers.

Researchers set world record on pi calculation

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese researchers have set a new world record in calculating pi, or the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter, taking the irrational number to the 3.22 billionth decimal place, Kyodo News Service said. The previous record was the 2.26 billionth decimal place set in 1991 by a group of researchers at Columbia University in the United States. The researchers included Yasumasa Kanada, an assistant professor at the University of Tokyo's Computer Centre, and Daisuke Takahashi, a graduate student at the university. Kyodo said. Although pi to the 3.22 billionth decimal place has no scientific value, "it is an attempt to work the computer to the maximum of its capacity," Kanada told Kyodo. "It will contribute to improving the method of scientific calculation." Kanada's group used a supercomputer at the university to twice calculate the number, taking 36 hours 52 minutes and 53 hours 43 minutes.

Dog bites Bonn environment minister

BONN (AFP) — A normally passive dog bit German Environment Minister Angela Merkel's leg while she was cycling in the countryside, causing an injury that required brief hospitalisation, police said. The incident happened near Eberswalde, in the federal state of Brandenburg, eastern Germany. Ms. Merkel, 41, was briefly treated in hospital for injuries to her thigh. The owner of the dog, a five-year-old bitch, said the dog had never bitten anyone before. "Lots of cyclists go by here, but until now she has never bitten anybody," he said. He said he even had given up using her for hunting because she was not aggressive enough, but he gave no reason why the environment minister had been singled out for the attack.

Beijing divorce rate reaches record 25%

BEIJING (AP) — The divorce rate in the Chinese capital is reaching levels comparable to the West, with a record one in four marriages ending in breakup, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. The report said husbands are to blame in 70 per cent of the divorces, in some cases because they acquire girlfriends after becoming wealthy. In the other 30 per cent, wives were blamed for not respecting their in-laws and putting too many restrictions on their husbands. The Civil Affairs Ministry says that the highest divorce rates are among those who work in the arts and media and among the well-educated. The report did not give a nationwide divorce rate, and there have been conflicting figures in the past. Divorce is still regarded by most Chinese as shameful, but attitudes towards ending marriages are changing, as Chinese society modernises.

AMMAN (R) — Hafez al-Assad, president of Syria, stood on the balcony of the Damascus airport to greet the Jordanian peacekeeping forces stationing in the city. He was accompanied by his wife, Basmala, and their children. The Jordanian forces were welcomed by the Syrian people, who are known for their hospitality. The Jordanian forces are part of a UN peacekeeping mission in Syria, and they are expected to stay in the city for several months.

KUWAIT (R) — The Kuwaiti government has announced that it will allow the Jordanian peacekeeping forces to visit the prisoners of war in Kuwait. The government said that the visit was part of a peacekeeping mission in Kuwait, and that the Jordanian forces were expected to stay in the country for several months.

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